WITHDRAWN

The Technique of a Minister

Bernard C. Clausen

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THE TECHNIQUE OF A MINISTER

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The Technique of a Minister

By
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Author of "Pen-Portraits of the Twelve," etc.

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Preface

I DO not say that this is how to do it. Indeed, nothing could be more fatally unscientific and inexcusable than to attempt to fit another church into this mold. That is the patent-medicine way, and no man with real professional training could be patient with it.

But I do say that this is how we have been trying to do it. And these are the things which have seemed to survive the testing process. They will be of small use as devices. They may have value as indications of a method. And all the method can claim is a certain empirical courage before the necessary "trial and error" testings even in church life.

Nothing was considered ineligible for attention merely because it happened to be old. And nothing was ruled out of consideration because it seemed too new. Everything was tried which seemed to promise extension for the Kingdom of Jesus.

B. C. C.

Syracuse, N. Y.

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I

AN ANNUAL RESIGNATION

EVERY year, on the anniversary of my coming, I present to my prayer-meeting a resignation, offered in absolutely good faith. When I read my letter, I leave the room, leave town, lose myself for twenty-four hours, and while I am gone the church has the right to discuss the whole situation frankly, understanding fully that nothing which is said will ever reach my ears unless it is deliberately and formally forwarded to me from the meeting by way of suggestion. If I retain my pastorate, it is because they decide to call me to it for another year.

If you object and ask, "What good does it do except the rather doubtful good of stirring up your church into turbulence every year?", I can reply quite frankly. Obviously it helps to relieve the steam-pressure of suggestions which might otherwise become compressed into complaints and revolution. The very regularity of this annual opportunity to express oneself by voice and vote,

makes secret disloyalty appear like the green snake it is, and gives me, at the beginning of each new year, a newly-committed constituency ready for my leadership. But I accompany this resignation with a complete and candid report of church success and failure during the past year, and a statement of three specific objectives towards which I am prepared to aim our main efforts during the ensuing year. Each year, we deliberately inventory our transactions, outline a new and definite policy of gains to be sought, and decide whether or not we are ready to proceed together.

It is hard to imagine what a sense of reality such a device lends to church life. Churches have encouraged themselves with the indefinite assumption that, of course, they were gaining. They have added every new member's name with meticulous care, and have been slow to strike off old names, even when it was certain that they were hopelessly lost to the church. Comforting themselves with the specious glow of such statistics, they have enjoyed an air of well-being without ever submitting themselves to a real appraisal. Just how much closer have we come toward the ideal of Jesus for our church life? Just what has been the

net gain upon our hopes this past year? What has justified all this effort?

It seems to me obvious that when this church-year is over, we shall be better off for being able to look back over a fairly definite landscape of ascent, and honestly say, "Here, and here, and here, has the Lord helped us."

But the main advantage of the plan is the effect it has upon me. I read a story the other day which seemed to put the situation aptly. A colored man went into a drug-store and asked permission to use the telephone. After getting his number, his end of the conversation ran like this: "Hello, is dis you, Mrs. Blanchard? I seed youah ad for a good man in de Sunday papah two weeks ago. Is you all got a good man yet? Is you all perfectly satisfied wid dat man you is got? I see! Is you contemplating a change soon? You is not? All right; thank you, ma'am."

Desiring to be friendly, the drug-store clerk said: "Too bad some one already has that job."

"Dat's all right," replied the colored man. "You see, I'se de man what got de job two weeks ago, and I was jes' checking up on myself!"

I never emerge from one of these annual resignation experiences without feeling that I have been

honestly checking up on myself. I am compelled to face the prospect that at the end of this year it will be my duty to render an honest report on our achievements and failures, in the presence of the people who have been my partners in the enterprise. We have set three tremendous goals. I can justify my continued presence here only upon the grounds of skillful and enthusiastic efforts toward those goals. My preaching, my prayers, my plans have direction. I take toll of each month in the direction of our purposes. I start early. I must. For the books close on the first of June, and I realize that I must have things ready by then for the spiritual auditors of my managership.

Meanwhile, I must be preparing three more objectives to propose for the next year. I must justify my staying on the basis of a set of new ideals which will be daring enough to lure adventuresome spirits, practical enough to translate themselves into actual accomplishments, and definite enough to make possible a frank report on them at the end of the year assigned to them. So I go through the months, treasuring up things to do, in order of their importance, diagnosing organizational weaknesses, arranging personnel, preaching to practical intimate purposes, gearing our

Christianity to the immediate tasks of our own problems, and rejoicing in that peculiar ecstacy of finishing, step by step, with recognizable progress, the task He has given me to do. It is almost worth the risk of resigning, isn't it?

And suppose the church should vote to accept my resignation some year? I should go! I should be a bit sorry, because I do not know of a church like it anywhere, and I am having the time of my life here. But, after all, if in their sober judgment they are convinced that they need more adequate leadership, surely I should rather have them say it thus frankly, than to murmur, and grow restive, and balk in the traces, while I broke my heart over the tragedy of it. After all, a church is not a monarchy where the chief end in life is the preservation of the *status quo* for the ruling dynasty. Nor is the church an institution for feeble-minded, to be ruled over with an iron-hand, and disciplined into a respectful silence. A church is a democracy, to be trained in the responsibilities of coöperative decision.

My resignation is dated to take effect six months from its presentation. I should spend those six months in a whole-hearted effort to make the people eagerly ready for a new man. They might

feel free to fill the pulpit with candidates as often as they cared to. At the end of six months, I should follow, without regret, God's leading, into whatever place of service He had for me. I believe we have allowed sanctified mysticism to obscure frankness. And we have broken men and churches on the rack of our embarrassed, artificial naïveté.

As for advice, I advise nothing. I know nothing about the complexities of situations elsewhere. I should be sorry if my policy were ever translated into a comment upon any other man. I have enough to do trying to act wisely in this environment without advising! I know that this is a good plan for me to follow here. I think it will be a good plan for me to follow all my life. But I do not want any man to resign because I suggested it. He might come to me after he had done it, and demand that I help him find another job! No, thank you!

II

"WANTED: AN ASSISTANT PASTOR; $200 A YEAR!"

I WANTED an assistant pastor who had no ambition to preach me out of my pulpit. As I imagined him in prospect, I hoped that he would be the kind of a man who would be willing to make calls, carry my messages, and always attempt to represent me at my best. I wanted an associate who would not yield to the temptation to stay in and read on rainy days. I was sure that we could not use a man who would embarrass me with unwise indiscretions. And I thought that if we could obtain a man who could be in about a hundred places at once, and would sign up for about what we could afford, (not more than $200 a year), I should be really quite happy. Well I might be!

The fact of the matter is, I have found him. He completely fulfills my requirements, and he has proven to be a life-saver to me.

I have employed him for the last five years

with an ever-increasing appreciation of his services. He has absolutely no overweening ambition for himself, and takes it to be his highest ministry to be a faithful assistant. He has never yet said one unkind or unwise word in the homes to which I have sent him. He has handled the most difficult human situations more skillfully than I could have done with all the anguish of a personal visit, and always with a peculiar knack which hides his own part in the matter and gives the credit to me. I have yet to receive a report which betrayed him as displaying those youthful defects in judgment with which willing assistants so frequently embarrass their churches and their employing pastors. His energy seems to be unflagging. His faithfulness is absolute. He seems to take delight in overcoming obstacles, in plying through hard storms, in performing his duties without excuses or delay, and in rendering a complete report. His health has never failed him. Day after day, he has been consistently and uncomplainingly at work. My use of him seems limited only by my ability to devise new ways in which to put him to work. I have sent him to hundreds of places in one day, and he has not faltered. And in all these years, we have never paid him more than $200 a year.

Of course, the fact of the matter is that he could not afford to live on what we pay him. He has a rich uncle who supports him in comfort and releases him for service to me. His uncle's name is Sam. This new assistant pastor of mine is the postman! The $200 a year is the postage we pay on the personal, hand-written letters which I send far and wide over the parish.

Some pastors use him for the drudgery of what they call Direct Mail Advertising. Behind this innocent title they build up great mechanisms of addressographs, dictographs, form-letters, mailing lists, and printed enclosures. I have no disposition to question the value of this type of general sales appeal. We use these values, too, and without apology. But we do not think we have exhausted mailing possibilities when we have done this. This technique utilizes the postman as a messenger boy. I have been proud of my success in employing him as an assistant pastor. This, I take it, is what you want. You do not need dodgers broadly distributed. You want somebody to do really intimate and personal things for you in your relationship with your parish. All that this involves is the use of hand-written personal messages, hand-addressed in your own penmanship, poor though

it be, using your own personal stationery, with a really individual and personal greeting at the heart of each one. You may have forgotten how to write with a pen, in this typewriter age. Your fingers may retain skill only in the forming of your signature. You can soon regain the art, if you are patient. Try it.

For four years, I have mailed to every member of our Sunday-school, at birthday-time, a personally addressed postal card, bearing an individual message on the address side, and a beautifully colored Scripture motto on the other side. This has meant nearly two thousand cards a year, an average of nearly forty a week; but it has richly paid. The office secretary has kept, from the Sunday-school records, an accurate birthday calendar in a big diary book, so that the cards for any week could be written up in advance. These she has mailed for me each day in time to arrive on the appointed birthdays. When I went on my vacation, I took the birthday book with me, and mailed the cards every day from our summer-place; and whenever I am off on a speaking trip, I mail the cards from the place where I happen to be, instead of leaving them in a great bunch, to be coldly and officially mailed from the church-office.

It is surprising what an advantage this token of personal interest gives the cards, when people realize that I have not forgotten their birthdays, even in the midst of a busy tour.

On every card, I put some message which dares the victim of the birthday to come up to the pulpit-place after the services and let me extend a personal greeting next Sunday. I am assured of practically one hundred per cent. response from the contingent which has received cards during the past week. I have a chance to greet them in these small groups, after their names have been freshly called to my mind, and almost invariably as they come to thank me for their cards, I am able to call them by name and thus help fix them all clearly in my mind. No device I have ever adopted has served so efficiently to express my interest in the Sunday-school, to give me a comparatively easy mastery over hundreds of names in a natural way, and to bind up the interest of our Sunday-school people in the church, for they have been personally asked by me to attend at least that momentous Sunday which marks the beginning of a new year of age.

Every new baby born in our constituency receives a letter of welcome from me. These notes

are addressed to the new baby by name, and pasted to the letter stationery is an appropriate Golden Text card, which serves as a motto card, and often presents a life motto for the little life so sanctified just then by the holy mood of parenthood. The statistics of new babies are accurately kept by a careful study of the list of births published each week from the City Health Records, in one of our daily papers. The names of the parents are checked with our membership list, and a welcome congratulating the baby on its wise choice of parents, is sent within the first week.

The newspapers open up another field for this assistant pastor of mine. All the members of the staff in our church have been urged to clip significant items in the daily news referring to our own people and their families. If a bank clerk is promoted, if one of our girls graduates from school, if a Boy Scout wins an honor award, if a new home is bought, if one of our college students wins a contest, or makes a class office, or gains a place on the Y. M. or Y. W. executive board, or plays a good game in gym or gridiron, if a personal disaster occurs,—as soon as the names are caught from the columns of the day, the clippings are made by the staff, and placed on my desk, where

I can use them as a basis for personal letters of congratulation, commendation, pride, or sympathy.

We call on our sick people on Monday—the church missionary and I together. We try to cover the complete list each Monday, but this is not always possible. In such cases as cannot be included in our itinerary, I always explain our inability and give our greetings by means of a letter which I mail to the afflicted home not later than Monday night. And in any case, where we have been led to believe they might actually expect us, I always make immediate contact and explanation by telephone. The bereaved homes in our church always have a letter from me. Heart-broken people often tell me that these letters are more to them than a call, for they can read the letters again and again, while a call has a way of evaporating into unreality within a few hours.

A letter goes to every new minister who comes to town, welcoming him into the comradeship of our ministry. A note to every prominent newcomer to our city life,—the new manager of our hotel, the new chancellor of our university, the new head of our hospital,—carries a welcome from the point of view of an interested citizen, without the slightest attempt at propaganda for our church.

No official retires from service on our church boards, no soloist does particularly well on Sunday, no Sunday-school teacher brings a group of her boys and girls to be baptized, no important committee chairman is discharged after performance of duty, without a cordial personal hand-written letter from me, as soon after the event as possible. All forwarded on my behalf with promptness and dispatch by my assistant pastor.

He is a marvel, this assistant of mine. Subsidized to the tune of millions of dollars by a thoughtful government, he awaits my bidding today. Is it any wonder that I am sending him, with his own note of recommendation, into the studies of thousands of minister-friends who need him and who will soon be getting as much joy out of his magnificent willingness, his faultless efficiency, and his patient humility, as I have ever had?

Try him, my friend. But one word of caution before I turn him over to you. Form letters paralyze him! No typewritten letters will do. Write your notes with your own pen in hand.

III

BACHELOR OF INTERNAL ARCHITECTURE

A MINISTER might well be Jack-of-all-trades without possessing one too many. To preach to a modern congregation involves the necessity of at least a speaking acquaintance with the literature and the attainments of a hundred separate fields of knowledge. And the wise man ventures into illustrations with the knowledge that some expert in the crowd will chuckle at some blunder in vocabulary or some inexactness in fact.

But when the speaking is all done, a protean temperament of various knacks is sure to be demanded for the practical program of the church. One must know at least enough business to follow the intricacies of church-trustee meetings, and to function with self-respect when the stock-salesman invades the study. One must know enough music to weave choral and organ strands into the mood fabric of the service. Even architecture is not to be spurned. For one can never tell when the

church is about to burn down, and one will be tossed by the circumstances into the maelstrom of bids and specifications, contracts and mortgages, architects and builders, arches and flying buttresses. Awaking in this sea of conflict, many a preacher has wished that he might have omitted some of his Hebrew and filled its gap with business law; or that he might have skimmed a bit more lightly over Greek art, and spent a little time on Gothic architecture and color schemes and acoustics.

But, after all, these professions are on the fringe of the ministerial consciousness. Vitally necessary when the crises appear, they can be neglected in ordinary times, and when the exigency does clamor for one or the other of them, they may be purchased by hiring an expert whom you trust.

But this degree of B. I. A. for preachers represents almost a compulsory course in preparation for the successful ministry. Its curriculum is not yet definitely prescribed. Its material is the most difficult in the world. Yet a knowledge of its technique outranks the ancient and honorable D.D. at least ten to one.

For, to be a Bachelor of Internal Architecture, one must have mastered the problems of human

adjustment. One must have intimate knowledge of the pressure-points, the peaks of usefulness, the finest economies without wasteful peril, in the utilization of human material. One must know how much strength is needed at every place in the church organization. And as a fundamental to the whole science, one must know how to draw a plan.

Ordinary architects have material approximately ready for their order. They may enter a statement of their needs at their convenience. As the construction proceeds, they can judge as to necessary re-orders, when material begins to grow menacingly slight. A thousand more brick, a bag or two of cement, may be ordered by telephone and delivered by auto-truck. And if, at the end of the process, there are supplies left over, there is a fair chance that the excess can be salvaged after it has been carefully returned to the building supply dealers.

But the Bachelor of Internal Architecture is faced at the very outset with an absolute limitation upon materials. His bricks and mortar and stone and wood are provided for him. He can add to his supplies only infinitesimal amounts. Strictly speaking, he must make his plans to use only the

material which is immediately available. If this involves the sacrifice of some cherished enterprise, he must utter no complaint. It is a part of the game.

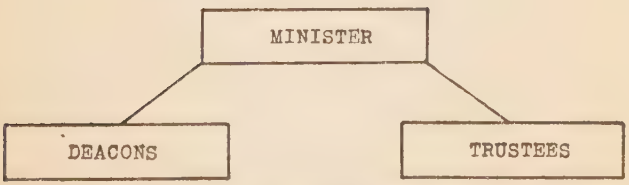
And he must utilize every atom of the material provided, without the slightest trace of waste. It is the only building enterprise in the world where no more and no less than the provided supplies must be used. Every person omitted from his calculation is not only sheer waste but a certain source of organic trouble later. And having used all the material and no more, the structure must be practical. It must be equipped with organizational devices which will make certain that it will work. Certainly for such absolutely important and utterly delicate tasks as these, the preacher must seek to prepare himself thoroughly.

The first thing he will find himself seeking is a plan. Architects tell me that a visual blue-print image of a building is of more advantage in construction than a thousand-page volume of meticulous description and tabulated statistics. Every man who preaches today, holds forth in a building erected after the pattern of a predetermined plan. Yet so far as internal structure is concerned, comprehensive plans reaching down to the last active

unit of energy and up to the converging point in the pastor's office are as rare as dodoes.

We have a rough idea that there are two separate branches of church life, but even this dull realization may be largely attributed to legal prescriptions which compel our churches, as corporations, to recognize the distinction between trustees and deacons. Obviously, these two departments of functioning should be kept in separately defined territories of action, and should head up in a central executive, who must be the pastor. Where their operations overlap, that overlapping should be frankly and definitely faced, and set rules for their coöperative action should be arranged. So that the obvious beginning of internal architecture is a simple bifurcation like this (See Chart 1).

CHART 1



But even this involves certain significant observations. First, the business of these boards must

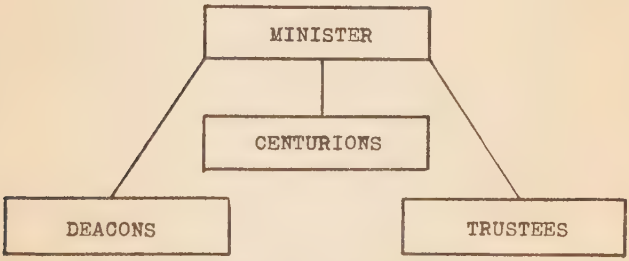
focus in the pastor. He must act as the clearing center for their reports and their achievements. He must keep executive contact with their activities, and be responsible for whatever liaison they have with one another.

Secondly, practically every enterprise of the church must be correlated somewhere under these boards, so that through them the business of the church can clear completely up through to the pastor. For, if he is to maintain executive contact with these central official bodies, he must be deprived of personal contact with the hundred and one other enterprises which must be whipped into organizational line behind these boards. Our experience serves to demonstrate that one other line of responsibility makes quite enough for the pastor to handle efficiently, and for our purposes just now, the Centurion organization, a districted form of parish administration, happens to form this line. It is frankly recognized, however, that this third activity is to be shifted from year to year as emergencies dictate. The Centurions, for instance, will, in process of time, be allocated as a subsidiary activity of the Membership Committee of the Deacons' Board, and a new organizational enterprise which seems to demand the personal authority

and attention of the pastor will take its place in the plan.

The third department may be the Students' Work, or the Men's Organization, or some other feature which will be administered directly by the pastor until it is safely on its feet and functioning, and then will be placed under the foster parentage of one of the boards. So that our church structure, internally speaking, looks like this in bold outline (Chart 2),

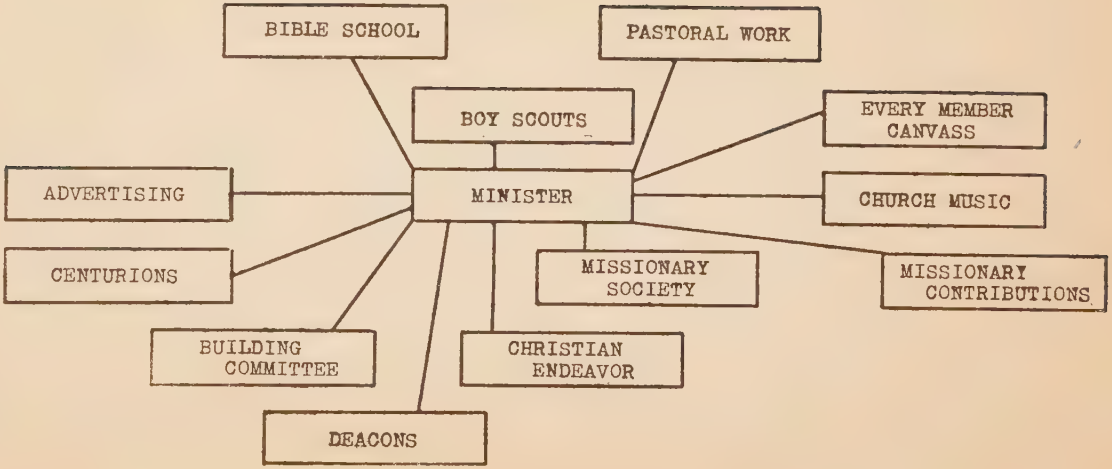
CHART 2



instead of like Chart 3 (page 30).

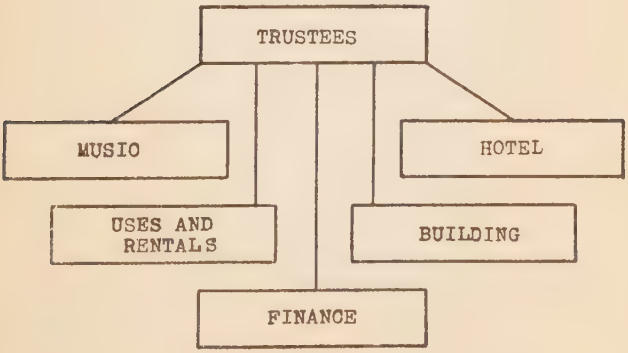
These obvious implications point directly, of course, to a departmental committee-structure in the two boards. The complete functions of the board of trustees must be divided into broad, general lines; a committee must be appointed to have

CHART 3


BIBLE SCHOOL
PASTORAL WORK
BOY SCOUTS
EVERY MEMBER CANVASS
ADVERTISING
MINISTER
CHURCH MUSIC
CENTURIONS
MISSIONARY SOCIETY
MISSIONARY CONTRIBUTIONS
BUILDING COMMITTEE
CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR
DEACONS

responsibility and authority over the questions in its own field, that field must be distinctly defined, and the board must serve as a general conference for consultation and authorization on already thoroughly studied and adequately presented departmental projects. Even the budget allotments should be allocated, and committee pride should be stimulated in producing a successful program within its field on the money which is available for it in the budget. Ideally, no trustee should serve on more or less than one committee, and each trustee should be given that sense of authoritative responsibility which is the finest fruitage of big business. The trustees, in other words, should look like this (Chart 4).

CHART 4



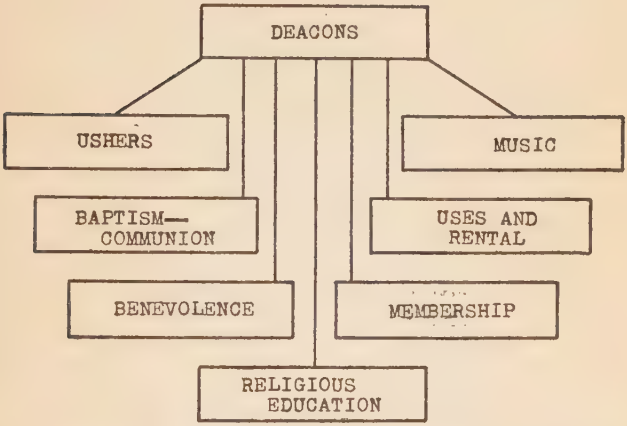
A similar alignment is obviously necessary for the Deacons' Board. The various spiritual enterprises of the church must not be allowed to wander at will without let or hindrance or encouragement. Too many churches are like orphan asylums, housing as best they can the parentless enterprises of other days, which were born of the best intentions, but, once started, were allowed to exist without any direct line of responsibility being drawn to them in the plan. As a result, they all tend to go neglected unless they succeed in getting through to the pastor. This second result slowly kills him. And he deserves it. He must learn to assume responsibility executively. Our Deacons' Board looks like Chart 5 (page 33).

A deacons' meeting is held every week, a schedule of committee reports is carefully observed, and the complete territory of deacons' administration passes in review before the whole board in the course of a month, at a rate of three careful committee reports each Wednesday night.

In our own particular structure, there are just two departments which seem to involve overlapping of territory. The Music Committee has to deal with contracts, expenditures, and business arrangements, while it impinges directly upon the worship

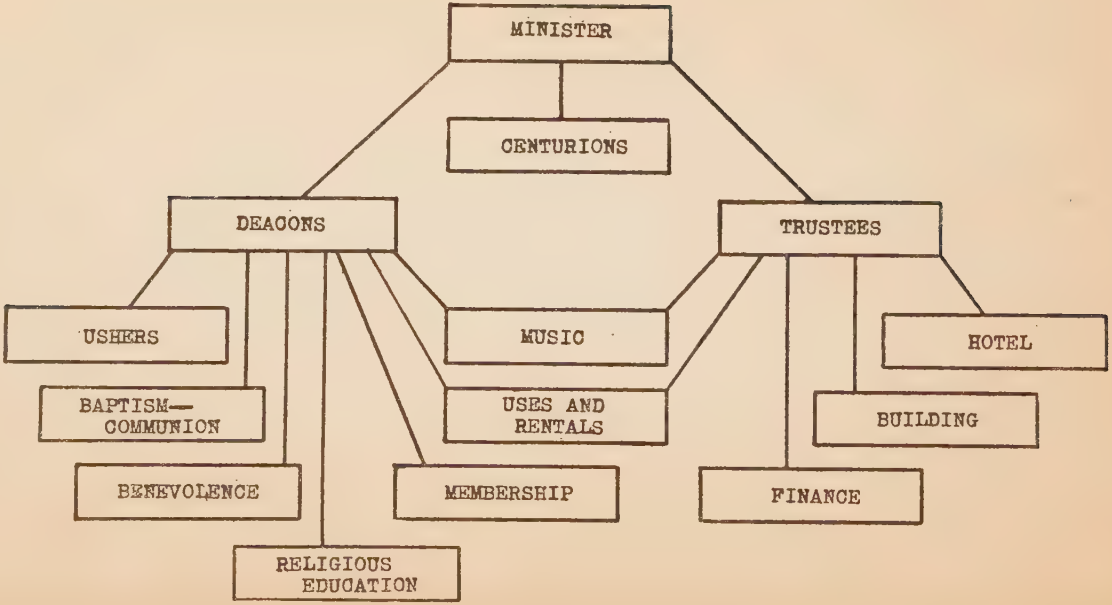
services of the church. The Uses and Rentals Committee acts on applications for our church building accommodations, and obviously must combine a wise business policy for outside appli-

CHART 5



cants, and a careful tact in dealing with the thronging appointments of our own organizations. In these fields, the indistinctness of boundary is at once admitted, and the trustees elect two members, the deacons two members, to each of these committees;—the chairmen being fifth persons selected by the duly elected four. And reports are made to both boards by their own representatives. Our

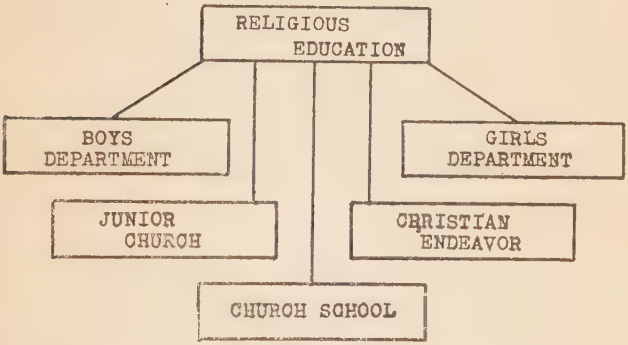
CHART 6


MINISTER
CENTURIONS
DEACONS
TRUSTEES
USHERS
BAPTISM—
COMMUNION
BENEVOLENCE
RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
MUSIC
USES AND
RENTALS
MEMBERSHIP
HOTEL
BUILDING
FINANCE

general structure then assumes these proportions (Chart 6).

And a single committee becomes responsible for its field like this (Chart 7).

CHART 7



If a pastor is to begin such planning of his work, he must be willing to abide by the results. He must not tamper with the lines of responsibility once they are arranged. The whole structure will clatter to the ground if he begins doing these things himself, making these decisions himself, meeting with these committees himself, because it is less bother that way, or because he believes things are being done slowly or unwisely by the committee in charge. Responsibility dies without authority, and

it is literally folly for a pastor to assume that he has no human material which can be trusted in the important places of his organization. One plunge into the depths of the idea will convince him that the water is fine, and make him ashamed that he lingered so long on the bank.

He may still be available for consultation and council. Indeed, he is to welcome every fair question and answer it quite frankly. But he is to make it clear that he will give his opinion only in answer to questions, and then only as an individual who will not be at all disappointed if his opinion is overridden.

And his contribution to the scheme will be a constant vigilance which is aimed at an increasing completeness and efficiency of organization. There must be a place under some committee for every organization in the church, where that organization will feel the lift and encouragement and supervision and check of the unified church program. There must be no loose ends of enterprises, reporting to the pastor or to no one at all. And always, he must back up his committees with his own authority and influence, watching them bruise themselves against experience, watching them blunder into wisdom and self-control.

It might be temporarily easier for the pastor to make the decisions and assume the responsibility. Certainly he would be saved much of the executive planning here involved. It would save him trouble and save the church trouble. But the result would be a permanent infancy which would mock the fine hopes of Jesus.

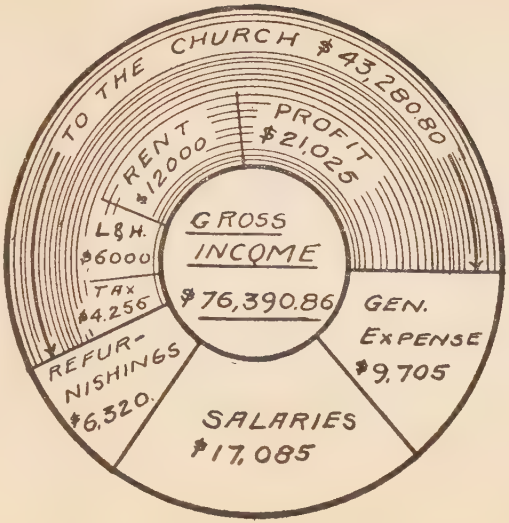
IV

A CHURCH LOOKS INTO A MIRROR

BOOKKEEPERS' language is Greek to the average church-member. We do not read the Bible in the original to our congregations. Yet we go on reporting the status of our church year after year to our men and women in the incomprehensible lingo of an auditor, speaking of liabilities and assets, of Cash Over and Equity, and dully blaming them if they do not appear to be interested.

It is no wonder that the annual church business-meeting is notoriously the dullest event in all the long list of boredom. Even the piquancy of a church election has small chance to appeal under the cover of droning statistics which mean literally nothing, convey no picture, outline no actual situation to the lay-mind. And the lack of a mastery of church financial situations is largely to blame for that vague distrust of statistics as such, that unspoken resentment against fiscal officials, that coolness in response to financial appeals, which

REPORT OF THE HOTEL.



116 ROOMS IN OPERATION.
EVERY ROOM OCCUPIED
169 NIGHTS LAST YEAR.
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY FOR
THE YEAR - 93%.
46,355 PEOPLE WERE
GUESTS DURING YEAR.

kills so many preachers. We fear what we do not understand. Any device which helps a congregation to clearly understand what is happening in the business enterprise which the church represents, will dispel fear and help solve the problem.

Elaborate, carefully-worded interpretations of the statistical tables represent a great advance. The most skillful men on the staff of many a great metropolitan bank are engaged in such work as a specialty. These institutions are realizing that they must make themselves plain, and they are summoning their finest minds to the technique of the task. Their quarterly statements, issued in newspaper advertisements, are models of concise, meaningful expression, which leave behind pictures of what all these jumbled figures represent. The Corn Exchange National Bank of New York has been doing extraordinary work in this respect, and any pastor might do well to clip one of their quarterly " Statements of Condition " from a New York paper and pass it on to his church treasurer as a gentle suggestion. But these devices are of particular interest to us only as confessions of the realization on the part of big business that statistics as such are meaningless abracadabra, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

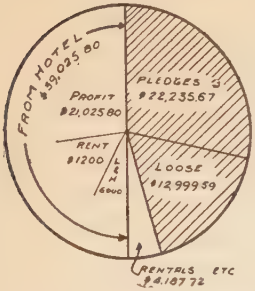
CHART SHOWING

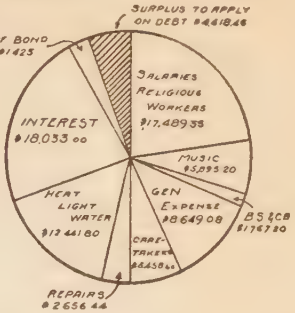
CURRENT INCOME $76,234.06

CURRENT EXPENSES SPENT $73,815.60

BUDGET $75,000

1923.





RECEIVED TO APPLY ON DEBT

FROM BLDG FUND TREAS	$12,087 40
" CURRENT INCOME	4,418 46
" OTHER SOURCES	527 50
TOTAL	$17,033 36

CHARTS SHOWING MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCH

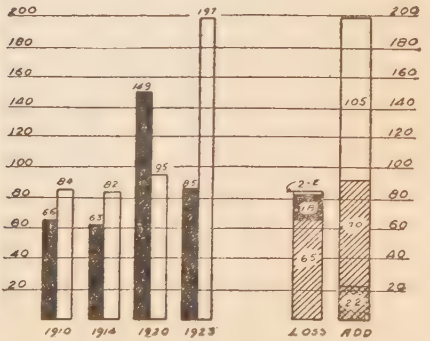
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

COMPARISON OF ADDITIONS & LOSSES

KEY

ADDITIONS

LOSSES



TYPES OF ADDITIONS & LOSSES 1923.

BAPTISM
LETTER
EXPER
DEATH

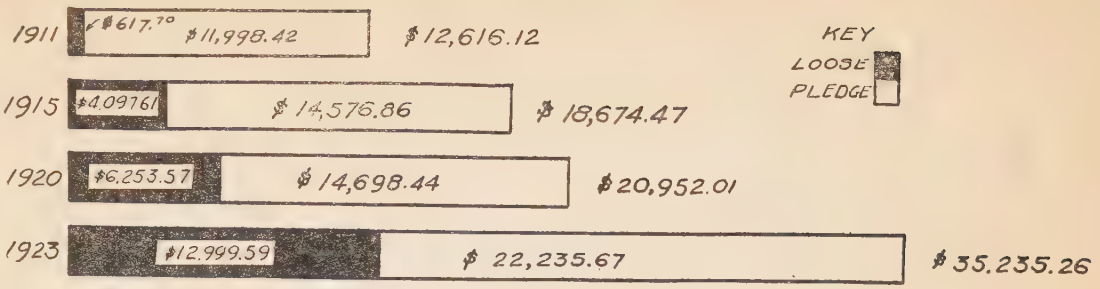
And even these skillful efforts, when they succeed in making the situation clear to the reader, do not make that situation attractive to the uninterested. The inquiring lay-mind can now, if it will, find out what the Corn Exchange Bank is driving at, and how far they have advanced; but there is nothing to attract the uninquiring lay-mind to the search. The real problem for the church is to make the annual meeting not only intelligible, but attractive. How can it be transformed into an eagerly anticipated event in the church life?

By the use of a mirror! Let the church actually see itself in the glass! Make the promenade before the mirror the feature of the next annual meeting. As for the mirror itself, use the stereopticon!

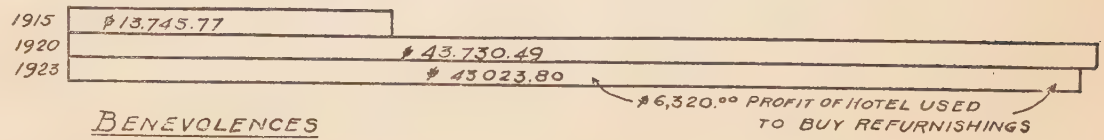
We tried it. Of course, it cost time and effort. Someone had to draw the charts, and this is no small art. But the technique is so well worked out in business that quite a literature has grown up around the subject, and even the veriest amateur may dip into the fringes of graph-making and chart-devising without much trouble. Then there is need for an expert photographer to make the necessary slides and prepare them for the projecting machine. One-third of the views were purely statistical, showing in graphic form the tabulations

COMPARATIVE CHARTS SHOWING INCOME

LOOSE COLLECTIONS AND PLEDGES.



OTHER INCOME



BENEVOLENCES

of our last year. Two-thirds were photographic, showing the personnel of our boards, action pictures of our outstanding activities, with a liberal sprinkling of humorous scenes and familiar close-up portraits, all taken with an inviting smile which was reflected upon the faces of the watching congregation as they all smiled back.

We appointed a try-out for the night before the annual meeting, and to this initial showing we invited only the members of the official family whose faces appeared in the groups. Twenty minutes sufficed to run through the sixty slides, and thirty minutes was ample for the pictures plus slight verbal interpretation, and a quip for a ready laugh here and there. Oh, how refreshing those laughs were when they were repeated at the annual business session the next night! For, many of us were remembering the drowsy indifference of session after session which stirred no spark of life at annual meetings before.

When the regular showing of the pictures came to an end, and we passed to the business of determining the policies and personnel for the coming year, all the effort in preparing the statistical views justified itself. For, there was evident in the discussion a firm and confident grip upon the eco-

nomic fundamentals, an insight into developments and needs, such as we had never succeeded in stimulating by reams of read reports, and an endless monotony of mathematical details.

To understand the sample charts which are reproduced herewith, you have only to remember that our building includes a hotel property, called the Mizpah Inn, which is managed by our Board of Trustees, and which constitutes an excellent financial asset. People went away from that annual meeting saying that they knew more about the church now than hours of study had given them before. And those meticulous bookkeepers in the church, who want to examine every column and foot up every total themselves, were invited to inspect the original books and entries at their own convenience, and satisfy themselves.

Several months later, I was invited to take the slides with me to a distant city to explain the scheme to a wide-awake group of two hundred leading business and advertising men. A poll disclosed that most of them were trustees or stewards or deacons or elders in their own churches. Yet they were willing to come forward at the end of my thirty minutes and frankly confess that they now had a clearer conception of the financial status of

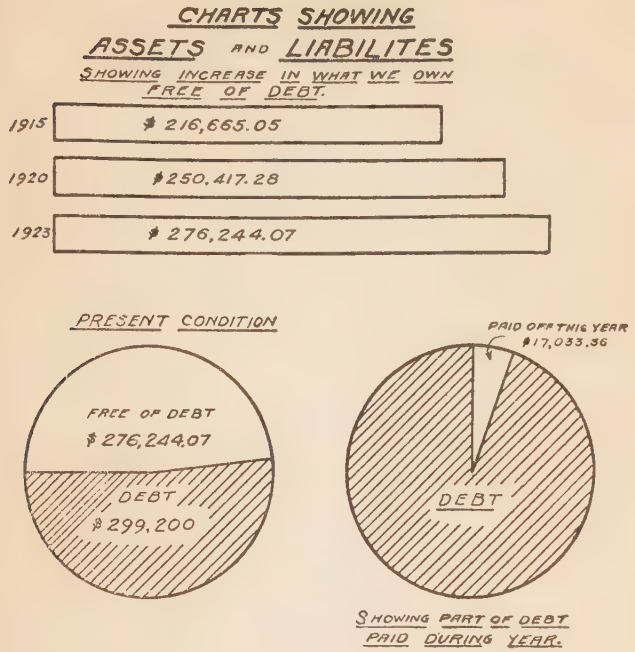
the First Baptist Church of Syracuse than they had ever gained in their own years of church experience about their own budgets.

Since our first experiment we have taken advantage of an economy. Instead of using the stereopticon, with the rather large expense of manufacturing a special set of slides for the occasion, we plan now to use a good Balopticon machine, which by means of ingenious reflecting devices will project clearly upon the screen the message or picture drawn or printed on mere cards the size of a postal. Then these graphic illustrations are to be filed away in the archives of the church, with the formal annual reports and the necessary mathematical columns, to give added interest as the years add their regular accumulation.

Soon we shall have not only a mirror for our own use each year, but an album of daguerreotypes, as it were, with which to compare our present appearance. And the annual meeting, with its inevitable anniversary memories, will take on the interest of a family reunion, when we get out the old plush albums and see how grandma looked when she was eighteen.

Meanwhile, we shall be adequately informing our rising generations of the facts about themselves

as revealed in our mirror, be those facts flattering or flustering!



V

SLAVES OF A DESK-PAD

I WAS a slave. Too long the chains clanked about my limbs. Too long did I do the things which I ought not to have done, and leave undone the things I ought to have done, cowed as I was by the imperious bluster of a little desk-pad. Recreation had been neglected, study had been crowded into a tiny corner of life, and my spirit had been entrapped. If I had any manhood left, the time had come for me to assert it, or be forever a slave.

Perhaps you know the galling pain that was mine in my bondage. I would rise in the morning with the memories of my past mistakes blotted out by the kindly mercy of sleep. My mind would be working like a trip-hammer. I would be conscious of clear-cut eagerness for the tasks of a day filled with real achievements. Plans were waiting to be made, and perfected in detail, sermons were begging to be written and books to be read. The zest of intellectual life

would be on me, and I would thrill with the prospects.

Then, as I would leap into my anticipations, some tiny demon of conformity would whisper in chortling glee, "You do not dare go on a minute longer without looking at your desk-pad. Wait until you see what you have promised to do today!" For just a moment, I would resent his prideful, confident intrusion. I might turn away from him and his hint with a show of resistance. I might begin without a glance at the day's entries. But I would find myself seated before my blotter. An almost automatic gesture would flip back the calendar-pad sheet and the current date would stare me in the face. I might writhe and howl in inner agony. I might beat my breast in terror and remorse. All to no avail. I would be lost. My slavery would have begun again as I conned that pad:

10: 00 A. M.—Mr. Todd, Guarantee Bond Company.

10: 30 A. M.—Jones, for Mutual Life Insurance Company.

12: 00 NOON—Near East Relief Luncheon. Benediction.

2: 30 P. M.—Central High School. Ten-minute talk to Assembly.

3: 15 P. M.—Mrs. Taylor, about her son.

5: 00 P. M.—Chamber of Commerce. Committee on Referendum.

6: 15 P. M.—Dinner with Forum Directors.

7: 30 P. M.—Welcome to new minister at First Presbyterian Church.

The chains would tighten. The locks would bang closed. I would start my dreary treadmill-going like a whipped dog.

Or, perhaps you have shared my experience in another mood. For weeks I might have been going a fast pace. Somehow every day has been filled to the brim. There was really nothing which I could escape. But the result has made me jaded. Finally a big Sunday has completely dulled the edge, and I would be fagged beyond description. Just one day of pressureless recreation might mean my salvation. My eyes would feel puffy and tired. My voice would sound raspy and thin. I would find it hard to be patient with the people around me. Do you, by any chance, recognize the symptoms?

Twelve hours of free time would restore me.

And the free time seems to be waiting for me to claim it. By great good fortune, the day's schedule bears no single engagement entry. The morning is bright with happy promise. I would leap like a boy from my couch. This would be my day!

What is that? The telephone? "O yes, Mrs. Duvall! This noon? Invocation at the Federated Clubs luncheon? Let me look that up on my desk-pad."

Coward that I am! I would know that the day is clear of engagements. I would fumble the leaves of my calendar. I would hesitate. Then I would yield. "Yes, Mrs. Duvall, I find my calendar is clear today. You may count on me. I shall be there at 12: 15." Crash go the glorious castles of my dreams. I would be a slave again. And I would deserve my fate.

Have you had an experience like that? What has happened to enslave us all?

Too many entries on your calendar, you say! You have promised to do too many things. And the remedy? Obviously to reduce the number of entries on your calendar. Promise to do fewer things? No, you are wrong. You can never escape your bondage that way. Too many men have tried it, and failed. What you need is a list

of new engagements on your desk-pad. You need to promise to do some more things. The bondage of a desk-pad is not due to entries, but to blank spaces. You shall never be free until you have definitely assigned some more engagements for every week. Only thus can you simplify your life into freedom.

And the new entries to be made are what? What are these new chains which promise us freedom? They are specific engagements devoted to the cultivation of your own personal life. They are entries assigning great chunks of time for recreation, for reading, for study. They involve a new willingness to cleave as faithfully to promises made to oneself as those made to the Kiwanis Club. Add new demands upon your time,—demands which you yourself make out of the needs of your personal life. Jot those appointments down on the calendar. When somebody calls to ask for an engagement during those assigned periods, answer that you are definitely committed beyond possibility of escape. You would do it if you had promised that time for the making of a speech to the ladies of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Unless you were willing to consider such an appointment with the ladies as a previous en-

gagement, and carry it out faithfully against all other ordinary claims, you must admit you are no gentleman. And unless you are willing to abide as strictly by the prescribed appointments which you have made in your sober moments of cool reflection for yourself, you are a slave, and deserve to live a slave's life. You are defeated because the time you have decided to reserve for yourself appears as blank time on your desk-pad. Jot it down as an engagement, and initial it for yourself; then treat yourself fairly.

Let us begin with Sunday. I have discovered for myself, that the regular tasks of the day—the morning and evening preaching and the teaching of the Baraca Men's Class—completely exhaust my strength. Very well, then, my Sunday is filled. Beyond peradventure, above argument,—I can do nothing else on Sunday. There is only one possibility. Perhaps, on rather unusual occasions, I can be relieved of one or the other of these regular duties. A choral service may cancel the evening sermon, a visitor may teach the Baraca Class. On such Sundays, few and far between, I can take on one more thing,—to speak at the Orphans' Home or visit the Christian Endeavor Society. But the Sunday program, as a rule, presents no single

opening. When I come home at 1: 30 from Baraca Class, I lunch lightly, and go to bed. And I sleep like a boy until 5: 00 or later, with an hour left for refreshing preparation toward the evening. I have made a stipulation that if for two Sundays I find it hard to fall asleep promptly, I shall resign from my Baraca Class responsibility and restrict my duties until my sleep comes back.

I have discovered that more than two Sundays of absence from my preaching program during the year has an unfortunate effect of breaking up the schedule into unfortunate fragments. So I have imposed upon myself a rule. I shall have no more than two Sundays away from my pulpit annually. When those two Sundays have been assigned (and I enjoy college preaching), there are no more vacancies on my schedule. When a letter comes, bidding me to a distant city for a Sunday, and I have already promised my two Sundays away, I reply quite simply and honestly that I am engaged beyond possibility of escape and must decline. If I am pressed to explain what special thing detains me, I reply that it is the supremely special thing of trying to make my own church program hold together. Since when did that lose its special character?

I find that I cannot preach Summer sermons and return to my Fall work with a full pressure of steam. Do I spend my time worrying over my deficiency and lamenting that I am not limitless in strength as some other men seem to be? Nay, rather, I mark all of the Summer Sundays as being already irrevocably assigned, and so reply to all applicants. Assigned to what, you ask. Why, to recreation! To the lost art of listening to some good preaching in a neighboring church! To the happy discipline of actually attending service as a needy worshiper! I have made the entries in my calendar.

Mondays, throughout the church year, are completely assigned. Their mornings are for personal correspondence; their afternoons, for calling on the sick, in company with our church missionary; the evenings, for the sheer fun of presiding at the regular meetings of the great Syracuse Forum.

Tuesdays are taken, from dawn to midnight, week after week, for recreation. It is the only entry which is permitted to mar a Tuesday sheet. And it is as indefinitely defined as that. I do nothing on Tuesdays which I have to do. Walking, skating, automobiling, tennis, or quiet brows-

ing among my books or the stacks of the Public Library,—these are the happy events which make my Tuesdays oases of delight.

Wednesdays are all definitely labelled,—mornings, for the preparation of Church Bulletin copy, including four hundred words of inspirational material for our weekly Pastor's Page, and for the defining of church plans connected with our regular services; afternoons, for committees, boards, round-table conferences, etc., at the church; evenings, for the church supper, the Deacons' Board, and the prayer-meeting.

Thursdays are captured beyond cavil. All day, from 10: 00 until 4: 00, I am at my office, available for personal conferences on the part of our well people,—ambulatory cases, so to speak. I call only on people too sick to reach me, and those calls are concentrated into Monday afternoons. Everyone in the church knows that I shall be in my office Thursday, that opportunity may be arranged on a ten-minute schedule through my secretary, and that on that day my mind will be utterly at their service. The only other feature is personal dictation for official correspondence, which fills the blank spaces between appointments. Thursday noons are opportunities for luncheon talks, or per-

sonal conferences over the luncheon tables. Thursday night is free for attending and enjoying local events, varied as they may be. I can accept local invitations for speeches for Thursday evenings.

Friday is consigned, from dawn till dusk, to sermon preparation, and reading for study. It is the only night in the week when I am free to accept out-of-town invitations for speaking appointments. These are strictly limited in distance so that I need not leave before late Friday afternoon and can return by breakfast Saturday morning. Saturday is altogether devoted to sermon preparation and study, with never a suggestion of an appointment all day and all night long.

Notice how many new entries this schedule suggests. But once these personal entries are made and observed, notice how the week simplifies. Observe the huge chunks of time which are hewed out of the solid week for recreation and for study. The Tuesday absolutely clear means more to me than three mornings or four afternoons. Long hikes, utter detachment, a whole day of gardening or snow-shoeing, have a quality which I cannot capture in tiny doses. The Friday and Saturday stretch of sermon preparation are more satisfying than six mornings, because I lose no momentum,

suffer no halting interruptions, and can pile books around me with utter abandon, and leave them where I want to until I have finished my task. And they lead up to a Sunday freshness, plus a vivid sense of recent documentation, which does not last from earlier in the week for me.

But what will happen to a pretty little scheme like this when you try to work it? What do you do when summoned to funerals? When called to death-beds? When faced with the critical situation of real life? To all of which I reply,—What do *you* do with such crises? You have promised to speak somewhere at 4: 00. Something which calls itself an emergency intrudes itself for that hour. You choose on the basis of your best judgment. Is this emergency enough to justify the cancellation of my appointment, or can I make some adjustment with the emergency? Having decided, you act. All I am demanding is that you apply the same uncompromising honesty in dealing with your own personal appointments. Are these emergencies sufficient to justify cancelling a speaking engagement? If not, they are not sufficiently important to justify cancelling these things which I have promised myself for my own soul's life! As a matter of fact, these emergencies will never

enslave you. You owe your bonds to the appalling unwillingness to jot down your own initials as possessing a fair portion of your time.

Come, let us be free men! I was once a slave. I am just beginning to rejoice in my new freedom. Let us break those chains! Slaves no longer!

VI

IN LEAGUE WITH THE WEATHER MAN

IT is ten o'clock on Saturday morning. I have just talked with the Weather Man. He says that we may expect, with some real degree of confidence, an ideal day for church-going tomorrow. It is to be brisk and cold, with a slight fall of snow of the cheery, ordinary winter kind, a moderate East wind, and a high barometer reading which will begin to fall toward evening. I thanked him cordially for his efforts in our behalf. He really has been doing wonderfully well for us. Of course, he cannot always guarantee absolutely perfect weather conditions for Sunday, but he does his best. And what he does has been of extraordinary advantage to us ever since we began using him.

Church weather is a peculiar brand anyway. It is a medium variety located midway between good and bad in the scale of ordinary weather gradings. A huge snow-storm, a terrific tornado, a sullen day of persistent drenching rain, of course discourage

church-going. People cling to their Sunday papers, and huddle gratefully around fireplaces and steam-radiators, when the weather is too frightfully bad for venturing forth. And the adverse effect of isolating storm conditions is an important factor in church attendance.

But we suffer quite as much from the inroads of weather that is considered too good for church-going. Warm summer days, with cloudless skies and the luring shadows of big trees; newly awakened Spring, with its fresh fragrance and its call to the "wanderlust" in our hearts; the crisp beauty of Autumn, with variegated glories in the foliage which garbs each hillside; and the snappy exhilaration of a snow-bedecked winter day,—these varieties tempt people to pass by church doors, and worship God, as they say, in His well-known "Great Out-of-doors." Golf weather, and motoring weather, and picnic weather, and garden weather, vie with one another and set up a successful record of accomplishment which somewhat dwarfs the showing of ideal church weather. It is good weather for church, as every preacher knows, when it is just decent enough for the old ladies to venture out, and yet not so good that the young bloods hurry to the links or the families fill up

their gasoline tanks and begin to debate over the outspread road-maps.

Obviously, then, the real problem for the church is this: How can we procure as many Sundays as possible guaranteed to bring us the exact brand of weather most suitable for church-going? And the subsidiary problem is this: How can we avoid wasting good church-going weather on week-days when we do not need it in our business? And the first step is to submit the problem to an expert, whom the government employs for exactly such helpfulness. Why not put the matter up to the Weather Man?

Farmers are warned of coming rains, so that they are spared the disappointment of having their hay spoil in the fields. Fruit-growers do not spray their trees until they are assured of several days of dry weather while the chemicals may have the desired effect. Fruit shippers are told where the freezing line will extend on any particular date and for any given period, and they do not ship perishable material into the marked districts. Steamship captains are warned of fogs, aviators have charts of prevailing winds, movie-producers study the possibilities of continued sunshine, orchardists have predictions of frosts, merchants announce

special sales of umbrellas, or heavy winter ulsters, in accordance with atmospheric forecasts. Meanwhile, the preacher, absolutely delimited in the effectiveness of his efforts by weather environment, goes fumbling along, as much surprised as he is disappointed when an important Sunday morning comes, with big features planned, only to encounter a furious whipping storm which scares people indoors, and leaves a frightening sea of empty pews to mock the high purposes of the church program.

Take our case, for instance: We have discovered that on a Sunday which is good for churchgoing, we simply cannot handle our crowds. People stand up in all the available lobby space, and hundreds are turned away. Give us a Sunday which brings utterly despicable conditions of storm, or absolutely perfect outdoor weather, and we have empty space around the fringes of our auditorium. It is obviously as unfortunate to over-sell as it is to under-sell any given Sunday's program. Hundreds of people turned away represent as real a failure as hundreds of empty seats. It means that you have failed in the other direction. And our experience showed failures recurring on one side or the other through a series of months, depending upon the weather.

So I went to the Weather Man one day. "I know you cannot guarantee us a consistent production of any one brand of weather for exclusive use on Sundays, unless some new form of control has been recently discovered. Is there any hope of that?" I asked.

He chuckled, and replied, "No, Mr. Clausen, we cannot do that—yet!"

"Well, then," said I, "why cannot we have a special forecast from you which will prepare us for the kind of weather we are going to have on Sundays? When you tell us in advance that the day is expected to be favorable for church-going, we shall deliberately curtail our publicity. We shall simply announce the services in a modest way, and attempt to reduce the pressure of our 'fair-weather Christians' and others. But when you tell us that the day is to be torn with a howling storm, or frozen up with a wild blizzard, or spoiled in some other way, we shall unlimber our big guns, on newspaper publicity. We shall push up the steam pressure on news announcements. We shall load our local columns with as much story material about our church as they will take. Will you help us?"

Like the good bred-in-the-bone pious Christian

he is, the Weather Man gasped for a moment. Perhaps he was imagining what the Pilgrim Fathers would have said to such utterly blasphemous tampering with the limitations of God's universe. But suddenly he left off being a Christian, and became a Weather Man again. And his comment, as a scientist, was a smile which wreathed his face, and an enthusiastic, "You may count on me!"

Thus our partnership began. And every week it justifies itself beyond our fondest expectation.

Every Saturday morning at 10: 00, I telephone him. He has anticipated my call by preparing a careful analysis of the forecast for Sunday, as it will affect church attendance. He gives me his expert judgment on the prospects. A national telegraphic service, involving hundreds of experts and millions of dollars has been placed at our disposal. He knows that weather can be either too good or too bad for church. He supplies the best he can command for our purposes. For the rest, he advises me according to his best technique. And he is as pleased as Punch.

If the weather on the morrow promises to be fairly encouraging to those doubtful folk who wait for the weather before they decide to come to

church, we rest back on our oars and wait calmly for them to come pouring into our church aisles when the first usher swings open the doors. If the forecast is foreboding, we dispatch at once to our newspaper offices all the propaganda which our ingenuity has devised or can on short notice arrange. We do not buy more space for paid advertisements, you understand. We send in carefully prepared news stories, cuts, and musical announcements. We do it shamelessly. We are determined to use every means known to modern life to consistently and exactly fill our church. And the newspapers do not resent it, as long as we play the game fairly. We must send real news. And we must stand or fall on their judgment of our material as news. As long as we never whine when they turn thumbs down on some of our items, as long as we are content to take all the space we can fairly get on the sheer news value of our material, they like it.

The effect upon our chart of attendance is obvious at a single glance. The line of congregation-count is being steadily levelled to our line of "Maximum capacity." The jogs up and down, over and under our auditorium capacity, are being eliminated. When the morning is to be clear with

a stormy evening following, we place our emphasis on the features of the evening program, and vice versa. We are now in control of an entirely new set of hitherto baffling factors. In the technique of the church, always complicated even at best by a maze of unexplored and unpredictable phases, we have succeeded in reducing one more phase to the realm of the "known." For these Weather Men claim that they would not be permitted to continue as self-respecting experts in the science of public forecasting if they were unable to show a record of eighty per cent. correct predictions. And we have been registering ninety per cent. correct in our returns during our partnership.

Yet it is no wonder that the Weather Bureau can help, with its hundreds of established stations, its thousands of observers, its ingenious mechanical devices, its maps and charts. Every day at 8: 00 o'clock, Eastern Standard Time, every Weather Bureau Station in the United States makes simultaneous observations on the local situation. These observations are communicated at once, by telegraph, to every other station. From this data, a map is drawn in each station, showing the exact situation nationally, and this map is compared with yesterday's map, and with local and

national records of previous performances. From this comparison, the probabilities for the next day are computed. It is the result of this nation-wide investigation Saturday at 8: 00 o'clock, which is placed at our disposal exactly two hours later, and which helps us to prepare for Sunday. All this wealth of equipment and training and skill focuses through our local station upon the difficulties and possibilities of our church plans. Is it any wonder that we feel a sense of satisfied contentment, as we go to bed on Saturday night? We have found another field which was for long years an impenetrable mystery, but which now invites us to study, to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. And the same scientific organization, with all its resources, including this Syracuse station itself, is available for every preacher in the country.

So successful has been the experiment from the point of view of the church, so obvious its advantages for Sunday services, that we have extended it to include our Wednesday night prayer-meetings, which threatened to become somewhat unmanageable on account of their size on favorable evenings, yet dwindled alarmingly when storms

raged. You have already guessed that we are not a residential parish with a church at the center of a closely built community. We are at the heart of a city of nearly 200,000 people, surrounded by business blocks, with our homes dotted all over the map, and our church enterprise is more like a department store than a corner grocery. With the technique of a department store, we must fight for our life. Every Tuesday at ten, I am warned of the weather for Wednesday night. Last Tuesday, the forecaster predicted one of the worst storms of the year for the ensuing twenty-four hours. A howling blizzard with a whipping wind and fierce cold was due. What was our obvious recourse? To sit idly by and deplore the fact that the weather would spoil a perfectly good mid-week meeting plan? Nay, rather, " up and at 'em," as the vulgar saying goes! Let us play up the prayer-meeting in Tuesday night's and Wednesday morning's papers. Let us make every home that reads our newspaper paragraphs hungry to be represented in the mid-week discussion. Let us arrange a hurried plan for a feature of musical interest.

We did. Hundreds fought their way through the blizzard without knowing just why. And they went away thrilled with the experience of having

found other hundreds who had been no less courageous.

Indeed, the Weather Man himself is waxing enthusiastic. He must be thinking about this scheme of evenings, when he ought to have his mind far away from his business. Last week, when I 'phoned him, he made a suggestion which has yet to be fairly tried out, but which seems to be absolutely luring in its possibilities. He said that he was certain of a psychological reaction to barometer readings. He believes that when the pressure is low or falling, people's minds are slow to move and sullen in their response. He is confident that when the barometer is high or rising, men and women are exhilarated, quick on the trigger, eager and ready. I think he is right.

And so I have since asked college and school teachers to make some observations on the idea, and they confirm the Weather Man's opinion unanimously. Doctor Huntington, Athletic Coach and Gymnasium Director at Colgate University, tells me that the experiences of his years have convinced him that teams have less fight in them, are more drab and unenthusiastic at low barometer than they are at high, when their eyes snap sparks and they fling themselves into the game. He

claims that it is a matter of blood circulation, with high barometer quickening the pulse and speeding up the life.

Whether this theory be true or not, we are testing out the general conviction of the Weather Man. He is forecasting for me each Saturday the barometer readings for the morning and evening of Sunday. Last Saturday, for instance, he promised a high barometer for the following morning, but suggested that it would fall rapidly during the afternoon and evening. If his theory is correct, I might expect my morning congregation to meet and greet me "on high gear." They would be eager, ready, almost restive, needing no stimulation but requiring rather some subduing into the mood of worship and quiet spiritual search. On the other hand, the evening congregation would present quite another problem. They would be dull, lagging, somewhat sleepy, slow to respond, needing the stimuli of quick attack and informal sally. The Scripture lesson for the morning ought to be read from the stately old King James version, but in the evening they would relish the crisp coinage of Moffat or Goodspeed. The morning hymns should be announced formally and correctly, with something of the stately

march of ritual in the whole program. At night, the people would need some happy rallying, a smile or two, a sentence of introduction that would pave the way for the hymn, more abandon and brightness from the pulpit, and a general infusion of pulsing life.

We are trying it. It may be utterly worthless, this whole idea. But I warn you that it seems to be proving itself. I am becoming more certain every day that the Weather Man is right. It is sheer gain to know in advance at what altitude of spirits you will be forced to attack two thousand minds tomorrow morning. It gives the preacher a new advantage over sin. He can be "wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove." At least, he can try.

If any man is tempted to claim that such mechanistic interpretation of the sanctities of worship constitutes a brutal defilement of holy things, I have only to urge him to try it. There is more romance in the high adventure of preaching for me, now that I have come into the possession of this guilty knowledge about the weather, than ever before in all my five long years of sermonizing. As well claim that the radio robs the sea of its romance. Some things have disappeared

from sea-faring, of course. No more weary months of helpless, hopeless tossing, no more frantic shrieks into an horizon that could never hear, no more pathetic rags lifted upon poles in a pitiful effort to attract a passing ship. But wireless has not killed romance, nor made an adventureless thing out of navigating. On the contrary, it transforms it into a still more gorgeous dream of exciting experience. And it does cut down the number of shipwrecks and the perils of the deep!

VII

WE SEIZE SOME HOLIDAYS

IF only we had some more time. But there is just so much of it and no more. And somewhere in the margin of time between business and home and recreation, the church must find its infinitesimal interstices of moments for its business.

No wonder that our planning and conferences seem so breathless and hasty. Our trustees give an evening a month to the business of the church. But some of them cannot come promptly and others must leave early, and the routine business takes up the available two hours, and there is no opportunity for long-range planning. It is hard enough to find time for auditing the current bills, and approving immediate practical proposals which require prompt attention. The deacons meet once a week between church supper time and prayer-meeting, when a half hour of time is devoted to the minutes of the last meeting, the receiving and granting of letters, the interviewing of candidates

for church membership, the hearing of reports from committees, and the issuing of letters of sympathy. We begin promptly, rush through our business at top speed, and seldom gain a single minute for a leisurely look, down the vistas of our church hopes. So our policies have that ill-considered, half-baked lumpiness which results in unarticulated results. All because we see no way of capturing any considerable block of time when the minds of our officials may be devoted unreservedly to the general interests of the church.

Our officials are busy men. Their minds are tired by evening. Sundays are preempted by worship. Yet the church must have an occasion for coöperative long-range planning. Have we not reached a practical cul-de-sac from which we cannot escape, and in which we must make up our minds to exist as best we may?

No, there is a better way out. There are whole days of sequestered time waiting to be seized. We can have these if we will claim them for the church. And within the limits of a whole day given to the church, more can be accomplished than in twenty hurried meetings at the end of busy days.

We began rather modestly. With all the holidays of the year begging to be preempted, we did

not grasp them all. But the plan is working out so well that we are threatening others. We have seized two days in the calendar and have staked them out for the church. We notify all nominees for our official boards before their election that one of the few set demands to which they stand committed is the assignment of Memorial Day and Labor Day to the business of the church. We entitle these gala days the Pastor's Picnics, although the pastor does little beside initiating the scheme. He does borrow somebody's country house within automobiling range for the occasion. Last year we spent Labor Day on the shore of a glorious Finger Lake nearby. This spring we go, for Memorial Day, out ten miles to a beautiful modern farm, with a rambling mansion and big barns and a grove of shade trees. There is a waiting list of available places backed up well into the years, for these picnics are great fun, and people enjoy entertaining us.

The invitations are carefully dispatched so as to leave no chance for resentment. The people to be invited are very carefully defined. Members of our two central boards, the centurions, and the presidents of major organizations are bidden to come with their families. We all meet at the

church at nine in the morning and speed to our picnic place by a procession of motor cars plus a big 'bus for those who overflow the private vehicles. Each family provides its own lunch, but an extra course such as hot coffee or ice cream cones is added by the hosts of the group.

The morning is spent in the jolliest kind of group play, without the necessity for a single sober thought. We give the hours unreservedly to the fun of getting acquainted with one another all over again. But we do try to plan the games and the events so that everyone is involved, and those modest people who tend to become wall flowers are drawn into the focus of laughter. After lunch out of doors, the serious part of this day of retreat begins. The families usually retire to the sidelines, and the church officials themselves settle into solemn conference attitudes.

On Memorial Day, a summary of the year's work is presented by each organization. A questionnaire is circulated which is to be returned unsigned by each person present, analyzing our outstanding failures and successes during the year and attempting to account for them. These questionnaires are carefully read aloud and discussed by the whole group. Then the pastor's three ob-

jectives for the ensuing year are announced and discussed, everybody present being under pledge not to violate official confidence, but to keep these objectives secret until they are publicly proclaimed with the pastor's resignation at a June prayer meeting. It is surprising to notice how the simple device of keeping the comments anonymous, frees the keen criticisms and produces a helpful frankness. No details are discussed, no attempt made to interfere with the decisions of boards and committees, but the conversation is kept close to the mark of the general policies which concern us all and for which no consideration is planned in ordinary Board meetings.

A Veterans' Association, composed of those who have attended at least four Pastor's Picnics, is especially honored each time, initiating its new members as the required record of attendance is completed, and announcing the various grades of veteranship which have been attained by the old-timers.

If the Memorial Day picnic is redolent of memories and past transactions, the Labor Day picnic is in the mood of bright " beginning again." We forget those things which are behind, and press forward toward the mark. The pastor's objectives,

which were confidentially announced at the spring picnic, publicly expounded at the Anniversary prayer-meeting, and preached upon through several weeks, to be left simmering through the summer, are now brought forth for careful inspection and detailed analysis. Plans are suggested for gearing the entire mechanism to produce the predicted results, anonymous recommendations are frankly made, this time centering on old things we should not do and new things we should do in the year before us. The interest in this day tends to bring our officials back home from their vacations early, and gives us a chance for a fresh flying start without several weeks of delay.

So satisfactory have been the contributions of these conferences to the general welfare of the church that we are now planning the extension of the idea to include one full-day mid-winter conference, utilizing the twenty-second of February as our date, and making the feature a sleigh-ride to a farm house with a big roaring hearth fire. This would tend to give us conference help at about the middle of the church year, and would strengthen the sense of inter-dependence and coöperation which has already been developed.

Even if people were free from the regular work

at some other time, we should still be willing to claim that cleaving to recognizable national holidays was great advantage. It fixes the times with inescapable regularity and makes our people sometimes guilty of the sacrilege involved in thinking for just a moment that these days are holidays especially for the sake of the Pastor's Picnic.

One device has saved us considerable embarrassment. We have always made plain in advance our plans in case of rain. It is consistently understood that the picnic will be held anyway, and if the out-of-doors plan is clearly impossible, the festivities will be celebrated in the church gymnasium. Such suggestions, widely announced, prevent that unsatisfactory confusion which so often leaves a trail of misunderstanding. And some of our happiest picnics have occurred on rainy days, when we transported the whole equipment into the big gym and there had our circus.

One more day has been definitely pilfered for our church program, although this is used for quite a different purpose,—the annual Pastor's Party, on the evening of New Year's Day. In the Chapel Room of the church, we arrange the most informal kind of a reception to which we bid all our friends of the church, congregation, and city. We give a

program in which only members of the pastor's family are used, and despite the overwhelming numbers who come, we try to preserve that uproarious, unabashed gaiety which we recapture from our memories of childhood. A play, some readings, some songs, some games, and a novelty of some kind, plus a souvenir for each person on the way out,—these are the features of another pleasant tradition which links itself with holidays.

These New Year parties always bring into the limelight the new members of the past calendar year, and we utilize various devices to make general acquaintanceship easy. But with propaganda purposes thrown aside, serious plans abandoned, we greet the new year with that spontaneous hilarity which only Christians have the right to claim.

If it is objected that these bold piracies by which a church seizes national holidays for her own use, are unjustifiable libels on the original purposes of the days,—a ready reply may be found. As a matter of fact, that libel has been committed by circumstance many years ago. People are somewhat bewildered by the possibility of a day of leisure. They gravitate without much thought to the easiest, nearest chance for recreation. We have discovered that far from resenting our intrusion upon

the precincts of a sacred day, they appreciate the direction which the Pastor's Picnic gives to their plans, and feel always that it has filled the day brim full of happiness and fellowship.

Indeed, many men and women have asked quite seriously how they might be given an invitation, and upon being informed that they must first be elected to an official position in the church, have gone away with one more incentive to faithful church activity.

The days are marked forever in our minds. Decoration Day, Labor Day, New Year's Day—these are the holidays of the church.

VIII

CAUGHT IN A TELEPHONE WEB

EVENTS have their own imperatives. The tiny church with its hundred members was sort of a family in which everybody knew everybody else. The community clustered affectionately around the sacred building. Any absence from service on Sunday had been already foreseen because the affairs of the entire group were all shared as neighborhood gossip. Everybody visited everyone else, and the minister, of course, visited everybody, often staying all day at a single household in that peculiarly beautiful relationship which was possible to a more leisurely civilization.

But when church life began to increase the size of its units, the whole attack on the problem changed, yet so slowly as to seem discouraging. It is surprising how long these growing churches persisted in believing that the minister must make at least one call on every home during each year. Of course, eight out of ten of the people on whom he called were out, and the rest were likely to be

furiously embarrassed at being detected in the felonious acts of housecleaning or washing. Of course, calling on these scores of busy and deserted addresses, made it impossible to do one's real duty by the sick and troubled, and resulted in a terrible thinness of sermon material as preparation, too, was pushed back into the clear space of Saturday night. And, of course, the men in the congregation justified their rather supercilious attitude toward the clergy whose main business in life seemed to consist in ringing doorbells and spending innocuous moments over the tea-cups with the none-too-deeply-impressed women in the church who happened to be caught in. But, for lack of a forthright and frank facing of the changed situation, the pleasant epigram, "An invisible preacher during the week will be an incomprehensible preacher on Sunday," drove many a man who should have known better, out from his study into the streets in a vain effort to be splendidly visible on week-days, and to run the risk with the results on Sundays.

But after a hundred men had died in the monotonous treadmill of formal pastoral calling, and a hundred others had found it necessary to buy ready-made outlines for the sermons of forty Sundays in the church year, something happened. In

our denomination it was the insistent demand of a national campaign for money, on the part of our mission boards. A sudden survey of our denominational life recalled the fact that in our largest and most prominent city churches, where the bulk of our wealth and interest was supposed to reside, there was literally no way of actually indoctrinating the members of the church. It was known that they did not come to prayer-meeting. It was as obvious that no large percentage of them actually appeared at church, and these stayed away when money subjects were in the offing. So the denomination in self defense was forced to propose that these large churches be geographically sub-divided, that neighborhood prayer-meetings be arranged, that leaders be responsible for the morale in their section, and that the pledges be received on the basis of sectional rivalry.

This machinery being temporarily wished on us from above, has proceeded to survive. It did produce astoundingly discouraging and encouraging results. Its revelations of uninterested members, of hopelessly muddled church records, of unbelievable neglect in the midst of poignant human crises, came like a cloud over many a preacher's heart. But the scheme did " get the money." And as such

it gained approval. And on the basis of that approval it is still with us, with its elasticity gone, and its organization often a mere skeleton of fossilized relics.

Surely the time has come for a reappraisal of its value, a realignment of its details, and a realization of its characteristic failures.

First of all, it utilized deacons as the operating heads of the geographical districts. This detail had at least three disadvantages. The deacons who had been elected to the official board of the church were selected without the slightest idea of sectional representation. Most of them came from the two or three steadier, finer neighborhoods. If they were to cover the entire parish executively, some of them must be artificially assigned to take command of districts with which they had no natural contact. And as the preacher could hardly expect a deacon to pick up his household and move into the selected district of his operations, deacons attempted to manage the plan in a sort of absentee landlordism. They did their best, but this circumstance evidently abandoned at the outset that motive of district pride, of sectional morale, which might have been counted on for much of the motive power of the enterprise.

Secondly, deacons are for the most part senior officers in the church, and do not usually gain admittance to the board until they have been members for many years. Obviously, the task of sectional administration was one which demanded a real reserve of energy, real aggressive policies, and physical endurance. This, many deacons could not offer, and their beautiful spiritual resources were of little avail in making up this lack.

But the third objection was even more serious. In such an organization as was outlined, it became absolutely necessary to stimulate faithful and prompt performance by the discipline of retention or separation from the staff. The right to "hire and fire" may be waived by a pastor as far as the ordinary official duties of a committeeized deacons' board is concerned, but when the high pressure of organized parish contacts was contemplated, performance had to be rewarded and inability or unwillingness to produce must be followed by immediate realignment, or the cancer of neglect would spread through the whole organism, and death would be the inevitable result.

These are the new features which remade the old plan for us.

First, the whole city was districted by the office

force on the basis of rational traffic and geographic boundaries, so that our map was arranged as scientifically as possible into the ten logical sections. In each one of these sections, I selected the one person who seemed to me most promising as far as reserve time and energy, executive training and ability, tact and devotion were concerned. This person was honored by appointment as one of the ten original centurions in this new plan. Even before their appointment, I had attempted to prepare public opinion in the church by a series of sermons and discussion-revelations of the tragic neglect which is possible in a church with the best intentions in the world if it lacks a functioning organization. So the centurions were disposed to greet their appointment as a position of vital importance instead of as an attachment to a half-baked hope.

These ten centurions were asked to survey their districts with care, and to appoint as captains the ten best executive helpers whom they could find, taking into account the ideal that each captain should be as nearly as possible in the geographical center of some unit of ten homes. And these ten captains, with ten homes apiece, would then cover the constituency of the previously outlined district.

For our church membership of 2,600 names is to be located in almost exactly a thousand homes within our city limits. And in two organizational steps we had worked down into a thousand homes. There were two points of eligibility on which we insisted, for both captains and centurions. Each one must have a telephone, and must be engaged in no other activity in the church organization. With these conditions observed, at one fell swoop our bewildering parish lost its kaleidoscopic confusion and settled into an ordered pattern of manageable proportions. It was now possible to hold definite authoritative persons responsible for conditions within specific territories, and the entire membership was caught in a telephone web from which they could not easily escape.

It was possible, for instance, for me to sit at my desk 'phone and call my ten centurions, forwarding to them a message of importance to the church, have them in turn establish telephone contact with their ten captains, have their captains deliver the message from me to ten homes, and then acknowledge the completion of their task through the centurions to me, all within the space of four and a half hours, under actual test conditions. Obviously, such a test has its chief value merely as an

exhibition of efficiency, for it is not often that it would become desirable for the whole church to be galvanized with a hurry message. But once the telephone channels have been cleared in this direction, it is possible to keep them cleared for prompt messages from the constituency back to the pastor's office.

Every centurion is engaged in a constant contest with me. When he succeeds in getting a piece of vital information to me before I succeed in getting it to him, he scores one against me. When I learn indirectly of sickness or trouble or changed location before he has sent the news to me, I score one. Every month the scores are compiled, and the results are compared at our monthly round-table conference.

The news of any item can come to me only through the centurions, and never from the captains directly. I have no dealings with captains. Even emergency information must take the stipulated channels. Just so with information from me. I send all my news by way of the centurions. Thus the lines of responsibility are kept clear and I am not continually confusing the organization.

More than that, each centurion has sufficient authority to match his responsibility. As far as

methods of work are concerned, the centurion has the right to use his own discretion. No pronouncement comes from above. I tell him what results we want. He has the right to produce those results as he will. He may even shift his captaincy appointments as he will. But every month he is held responsible for at least one new idea in district administration which he shares with the other centurions. And every month he must endure the discipline involved in comparing his results with those of the other centurions. For a frank ranking of districts in order of efficiency is displayed every month.

But how is it possible thus to grade the districts and on what basis are they arranged for honor or dishonor? Surely the mere reporting of items of parish information is an insufficient criterion.

Exactly so. Each month a specific task is assigned to the centurion organization, which takes each captain into every home on his list, on a definite errand from the church. This errand is always such as to result in a report to the church. One month it will be a complete census check on names and addresses for all our members. One month it will be our canvass for current expenses. One month it will be a sifting of the entire church

population in search of new members for the church. But in all the months of the centurion program, they are all asked to report on the results of a visit to every home. The tasks are assigned at the round-table conferences, which I call on the first Wednesday night of each month. Three weeks later the tasks are to be completed and the returns all in. Results reported later than that day are not credited to the centurion organization. The week following the reception of the returns is devoted by our Kardex Committee to recording the results in visual form. And when the centurions meet me the next month, for the assignment of their next task, they are treated to a view of the Kardex Visible Files, which indicate exactly how complete was their own district as compared with other districts, and how completely each captain performed as compared with the other captains within their own district.

A word about the Kardex File is in order here. It is a steel cabinet of thin steel trays, with index cards so filed that they overlap and reveal an edge bearing the name and address. Our entire resident membership is listed in this file according to centurion distribution. The centurion of District Number One has his hundred homes listed in two trays,

with his captains listed at the heads of their respective units. There is space at the edge of the cards for the insertion of tiny celluloid signals, so that we can visually indicate the homes where we gained the results we wanted. The Kardex Committee is responsible not only for correctness in the names and addresses and arrangement of the file, but also for recording each month by these celluloid signals the places where success was achieved. It is a remarkable discipline which this involves. I have seen strong men quail as they faced their trays and realized that carelessness of planning or lack of executive insistence had had its result in a poor showing during the past month. I have seen centurions as happy over a one hundred per cent. tray as over a new baby. And I have seen this visual recording of results work its way into the most astounding morale of willing devotion.

In addition to these monthly tabulations of signalled results, we keep on the back of each card a permanent record of the results from month to month. And the usefulness of all this compiled data is evident when I tell you that the entire organization is completely overturned every year. Every centurion who is serving this year will be discharged back into the ranks, with one exception,

—the best centurion will be honored with promotion to the office of chief centurion. Every captain who has been at work this year will be released with thanks in June, except the best captain in each district, and he will become automatically the centurion in that district. Having been promoted to the centurionship, he will be responsible for naming his own captains with whom he desires to work out the destinies of his district, our only restriction being that the captains must be new, must be hitherto unattached to definite work in the church program, and must have a telephone. Every year we weave up the whole church in a new telephone web. No fossilization allowed here!

But who has the unpleasant task of selecting the "best centurion" and the "best captain"? Nobody. It is done automatically. By the Kardex File. Results are the only things which count. Any invidious comparisons are made not by the pastor but by the records. You place yourself, without any chance for a quarrel.

All through these paragraphs, I have been using masculine pronouns, as if men only served in this centurion group. As a matter of fact, no such stipulation is involved. My own group of original centurions was about half and half. The logic of

the recorded results has been slowly reducing the number of men in the central positions, and as women have proved their efficiency in this work they have been working their way to the summits. This year seven of our centurions are women.

Just now, I am engaged in an interesting process for myself. I am working my way up through the various centurion organization grades. This year I am a captain. I have my own unit. I am under orders from my centurion. I am proving that it can be done. I want to make my unit the finest unit in the district. So far it is one hundred per cent. for every month. I glow with pride when I see my cards all signalled with the indication of performance. Who knows? Some day, if I try very hard, I may get to be a centurion myself!

IX

THE ART OF THE PASTORAL CALL

EVERY year, I invite as my guests, for a day in the heart of our church, the members of the senior class in our nearby seminary. Within a few months, these young men will be graduating out into a world of cruel experience. I remember how I felt when I was as near to my ministerial fate as they are, and I invite them for a day of frank questions and answers. They come in the morning, they stay all day, and usually time their visit so that they can remain for our mid-week prayer-meeting, visiting our board sessions, etc.

It does not take long to start the flow of questions. And they always follow approximately the same direction. What these young men want to know first and foremost is how to perform those ritual ceremonies in the church which they must soon assume. How do you administer baptism? How do you preside at the communion service? These practical, prosaic

considerations seem to bulk large in their eager minds.

But first in order of poignancy is a question which is surprising in its regularity of appearance. How do you make a pastoral call? Evidently this feature of a pastor's duties has assumed the proportions of a bugbear to prospective ministers. They need not be abashed. Older men than they have fought through the years without reaching a satisfying conclusion as to the need and method of parish visitation. And I am not surprised any more, when out of the early portion of this pilgrimage of queries, there arises the stock question, "How do you make your pastoral calls?"

My answer can be quite frank. I do not make them. If I tried to, I should die under the intolerable weight. We have 2,600 members, in a thousand different city homes. An annual or even bi-ennial visit to every household would be a gruelling, killing task, with ninety per cent. of it evaporating, devoid of result. If it cannot be done completely, and it cannot, then it must not be done at all. For selecting lists of pastoral favorites is fatal to the spirit of the church, on whatever fine motive the listing is based. So I make it my set and announced rule, that I call on no well people.

Only the monster of custom sends ministers out on the indefensible business of ringing doorbells and palavering with surprised and embarrassed housewives.

How, then, do people who really need me find access to me? It is for this that Thursday exists on the calendar of my week. We make it generally known that I am always in my office all day Thursday for conferences, and that appointments can be made by telephone to prevent delay if that is desirable.

When a caller comes who is not expected, or for whom no appointment is listed, he is shown my appointment list, drawn up in ten-minute intervals throughout the day, and he is asked to choose, from whatever free time remains, at his discretion. All the ambulatory cases, the office calls, of my busy practice are dealt with on Thursdays. And the day often provides wonderful tonic for my dragging soul, as it bears to me the mingled romance of tragedy and rich comedy. Even automobile salesmen and insurance men are consigned to the vacancies in Thursday's schedule, and they sometimes tell me that I come down to my office on those days equipped with a liberal supply of " No."

For the people who cannot come to me, Monday

is kept sacred. We learn their names in a score of obvious indirect ways, with most of such information coming in through the congregation on Sunday. But in addition to the ordinary channels of news, we have our centurion organization, with one of its great purposes the forwarding of such items as these. To this device we add the sick list bulletin. Listed on prominent boards throughout the church-lobbies, are copies of the names which we have on our sick file as of Saturday night. Underneath these names there is always left space for additions. New names are pencilled in every Sunday by members who know about cases of illness and notice that we have omitted them from our lists, and on Monday these boards are denuded by an office secretary, and the results are tabulated for our calling list.

Promptly after lunch, the church missionary and I sally forth in our Ford coupé, intent on covering with a call every person whose name appears on the sick list. The habit has become ingrained in their expectations, and we find them anticipating us, week after week. Monday is a good day because it is so close to the day when we gather fresh news; because it gives us a chance to carry bouquets of flowers, still gay, which were used as

church decorations the Sunday just before; and because it affords me a peculiar, indirect recreation. The tension is beautifully released on the strings left taut from Sundays, and I find I need what Monday does for me.

We always find all our people in. They are too sick to get out. So the sense of lost motion in vain doorbell ringing is eliminated. And the worse the day, the more they need our coming, and the more fervently they appreciate it. The church missionary has been responsible for arranging the itinerary, and we go to every place together. So we spin around the circle, taking care never to stay too long.

We observe certain set rules. I always leave a little Scripture card as a memento of our visit, and always insist that the golden text be memorized before I come again. The card stands against a medicine glass or is tucked away beneath the cover of a loved Bible. Whenever the patient sees it through the ensuing weeks, something of the happy comradeship of our visit is made real again. And often, in cases of long sieges of sickness, great collections of these little cards are assembled. One old lady, upon whom I called every week for over a year, pasted her little cards upon a background,

and had them framed, arranged in a lovely decorative design.

We always leave some piece of more pretentious church literature. The bulletin of yesterday is delivered, if no one else has brought one to date. A pamphlet sermon, or a copy of our monthly "Chronicle," may be left to while away the time. It is almost unbelievable, how invalids will cherish such simple symbols of our Christian fellowship. Often we sing a quiet hymn together, and we discover that the memory of such a moment is cherished long. And always we have prayer together. I kneel at the bedside, in home or hospital ward, and lead in prayer, finally joining all our voices in the Lord's Prayer.

From place to place we go, with our flowers and our Scripture cards and our church literature. Always we try to carry things off with a high hand. The light touches of sincere wit, the hearty laugh, the confident praying,—these are the tonic which sick souls need.

It was hard to keep to our plan at first. People still felt that they deserved a pastoral call. But we blithely insisted that it could not be done, and if it could not be done, we would not try it. And now the point is completely yielded. People do not

expect us when they are well. They know where I may be found on Thursdays, and thither they come, a constant stream of need and strength. And sooner or later someone falls ill in their home. The news finds its way to us *via* centurion or sick list. The next Monday we are there, helping as best we can, and pausing to do a real bit of ministry for them. Then everyone rejoices that our weeks are not burdened with the futile task of hurrying through a thousand calls in a year. We have time for our sick. And they, God knows, have time and inclination for us.

X

WHAT IS SO RARE AS A FULL CHURCH IN JUNE?

AND what shall the church do about it? Take the month as a signal for that slow death which settles like a pall over the summer season? Surrender without a struggle to the so-called inevitable? Write June off on our books as a total loss, and close the preaching season on a dreary note of defeat? Or accept its limitations as challenges, and stand up for the fight?

We have tried both ways. We are ready to acclaim the second. It lends piquancy to the year's plans, it sends us all off into the vacation season feeling like conquerors, and it magnificently adds to the aggregate of people reached by the message. It places June on the calendar of our church life as one of the happiest of occasions. And it takes advantage of what seem to be the inescapable barriers which the month erects.

With our experience neatly packed away in our mind, it seems difficult for us now to understand

why churches spend all their ingenuity and their budgets in programs and advertising during the height of the season, and meekly submit to the difficulties of June and September. Why buy advertising space to announce an Easter program? People will throng your church anyway that day. Keep your features and your plans to even up the level of attendance during the trying seasons. A straight line at the top of the chart is the ideal, not these terrific spurts which record hundreds turned away one day, and hundreds of empty seats six weeks later. The time for careful planning and ardent ingenuity and propaganda pressure is June, when every breeze is fighting against you, every bird-song is competing with your soloists, and every motor car is a lure away from the place of worship.

We have called it Reunion Month. And every Sunday is labelled with its appropriate reunion. The New Members' Reunion comes first on the list. It is our custom to celebrate our Communion Service on the first Sunday in every month. June happens to be the anniversary of the beginning of this pastorate. So the choice of occasions was dictated by circumstances.

Weeks before, the entire list of members who

have been received since my first sermon was preached here, is thoroughly revised and the latest corrections are made. Then they are all notified in ample time that their big day is soon to come. They are to be seated in reserved delegation sections according to the church year when they joined, each one having received a special ticket of admission enclosed in their invitation notices. A flower is provided for each one to wear as the new members enter the church. I always repeat, with some incidental changes, the features of that first service when first I met this church. The hymns and the anthems are the same, the Scripture readings are the same, and the sermon is the same. These new members are also given the responsibility for the prayer-meeting on the following Wednesday night, and they are notified that only they will be permitted to take part in the discussion.

It is rather an impressive opening for a month like this to have the entire center section of your auditorium jammed with people who have joined the church during a single pastorate. And the morale which is afforded the new members themselves is no small asset. A prize (usually an autographed copy of my newest book) is given to the

new member who has traveled the greatest distance to be present. And after the service, we all file out, these new members and I, to the Court House steps near by, where a photograph is taken for our church files, and incidentally for the rotogravure sections of our newspapers. For the reporters consider this type of program the best of news, and eagerly quarrel for the right to publish the official photos throughout the month.

None of the reunions photographs better than our Children's Day crowd, which occupies the center of our attention on the second Sunday morning in June. I think it is unquestionably true that the Sunday-school is often unintentionally slighted through less than its proper recognition from the church, in a public and obvious way. Surely at least once a year, it is fair to bow officially to this great agency. So we take the assigned international Children's Day, and turn over our morning service to our youngsters. The choir is a specially trained chorus of children; a boy presides; children announce the hymns, read the Scripture, offer the prayer, receive the offering, manage the ushering, present features of their own, join in a Scriptural pageant under the direction of the Sunday-school superintendent, and leave just a few minutes

for me in which I may tell them what the church thinks of Jesus' way in a child's life. Of course, nothing insures more specific interest in a service than the knowledge that someone of your own household is to take part in it. And if anything may be counted on as a certainty in our church program, it is that there will be standing room only on Children's Day. Because the regular Sunday-school program which ordinarily begins at noon is omitted for that occasion, we make no apology for extending somewhat the length of the service and effecting a combination between church and the children.

Near the middle of the month, "when young men's fancies lightly turn to thoughts of love," we use June's third Sunday for our annual Wedding Bells Reunion. I have kept, of course, a very careful record of my marriage ceremonies, and have a list of names and addresses which are corrected every year. Late in May, we send out a letter to all these people, whom I have married, announcing the reunion and summoning them from far and near. We offer to save them space in the auditorium where all may sit together, extend our regular nursery facilities so as to take care of the unusual influx of little babies to be amused during

the church program, and offer a prize to the best boy and the best girl babies that have come to bless these newly founded homes.

Nearly three hundred weddings have marked my happy years here, and we have had responses from as many as eighty-five per cent. of them in reply to our notes of invitation. Most of them can come, but many at a prohibitive distance write, expressing their gratitude for the thrilling memories which this plan evoked, and sending greetings to their matrimonial comrades.

Of course, the opportunity for a word of frank counsel along the lines of Christian home-making is not to be despised. Often out of this reunion the young people decide to join the church and make a fresh start, religiously, with their children. But the best fun of all is the baby show which forms the side issue of the occasion. I summon all the doctors in our whole membership to act as judges, whatever their professional specialty has been. This prevents invidious distinction, which I have no desire to make. One of our big Sunday-school rooms is given over to the judging. The verdict is announced and the prize babies introduced as a part of the pre-offertory notices.

We conclude our special June schedule with a

Silver Threads Reunion on the fourth Sunday morning in June, and to this we invite all Christians over seventy. A fleet of automobiles is commandeered to provide the transportation, easy chairs are placed in a great tier just in front of the pulpit, the sermon is usually centered upon the beauty of trustful Christian old age, the oldest man and the oldest woman in attendance are especially honored (again with autographed books), and, of course, the regular reunion picture is taken, which forms the richest kind of material for our church archives.

Perhaps this will serve as an opportunity for emphasizing the extreme value of a bulk of church pictures carefully preserved. How useful they are in regular historical interest could be observed at our annual meetings, when we marshall the outstanding events in a stereopticon survey of the past year. But the building up of a body of photographic glimpses lends piquancy to each repetition of a stated event. In the lobbies of the church, at each of these reunions, for instance, we plan to exhibit the pictures of the similar reunions which have been staged in preceding years. The changes which the years have wrought in prominent personalities, the gaps in the line as time moves our num-

bers down, the happy memories which cluster about beloved scenes of inspiration,—these may all be real if the pictorial history is carefully collected and wisely—not too frequently—shown.

All of this interest we attempt to concentrate upon difficult June. No one in the church ever thinks of June any more as less than a glorious asset. It used to be a discouraging liability. It was disheartening to breeze through a splendid year, only to have your auditorium yawn with space, your congregational singing grow thin and uninspiring, and your preaching grow jaded just before vacation time claimed us, and bade us say farewell to our church year upon a note of dull failure. Now, the June Sundays are as eagerly anticipated by preacher and people as any events in the year. Reunion Month has established itself as a happy tradition in our calendar of real occasions.

XI

WOULD YOU GO TO PRAYER-MEETING IF YOU DID NOT HAVE TO?

OF course, you go to prayer-meeting. But that proves nothing. You have to. Would you go if you did not have to? Is there anything really inspiring in the experience for you? It is rather a humbling way of putting it. And it leads our minds back directly to the underlying question. Is the mid-week meeting an asset or a liability, to you and to your church?

Some prayer-meetings continue to exist on the relics of past habits. A generation schooled itself to attend the mid-week meetings, and these impressions have not yet worn away. Week after week they come, without ever thinking about the actual contribution which the program is making to their own lives. Some prayer-meetings exist largely on the discipline of prescribed loyalty. For the sake of the church, or not to disappoint a beloved pastor, the faithful people wend their way to

church. But no one could be proud of the arrangement of such a service.

The real test comes in the ability of your prayer-meeting to attract new people. Does the service so vitally help people that they talk about it to others? Do you lure strangers into your mid-week service, and having lured them, do you hold them? Is the prayer-meeting a real part in the structure of your church strength, or is it just another one of those things which continues to be done because it has always been done? Would you attend if you did not have to?

The question came directly to me after a year or two in the present pastorate. We had followed the modern trend. The old-fashioned mid-week program had obviously gone to seed. What was the natural thing to do? Exactly what so many ministers have done,—go as far to the other extreme as possible. If the prayer-meeting seemed dead, liven it up,—to the very limit. Church suppers, with "pep" songs and high pressure jollification after the manner of the luncheon-club plan; moving pictures between the supper and the service; then a rousing program of vibrant songs, a brief lecture from the pastor, a separation into class groups for study and discussion. The model

on which this plan was built was the three-ring circus. Something doing in every direction every minute,—no gaps in which people became drowsy. Make it live! Fill every minute with interest. And if it became necessary to add a frolic in the gymnasium, where men in their shirt-sleeves and women with their hair tumbling engaged in the ecstacy of volley ball, etc., so much the better. No one could go to sleep in such an atmosphere.

We tried it. We left out only the very extremes. We wanted to have a prayer-meeting that really sparkled. We succeeded in getting the sparkle, all right. What disappeared was the prayer-meeting.

I used to go home after these " peppy " Wednesday nights absolutely exhausted. The heavy schedule of Sunday was a simple matter compared with the awful mid-week strain. A three-ring circus is not an easy thing to manage. On Wednesday, as I dragged my weary bones to my study, a question crossed my mind: " I wonder if all the people who attend get as tired as I do in these programs? " They come in from homes and shops and offices and schools, tired by the ordinary course of their business. Does " prayer-meeting " exhaust them as it does me?

I asked some of them for their frank opinions.

And I found my suspicion being fed. There could be no doubt about it. The three-ring circus was almost as hard to watch as it was to manage. They were breathless after the evening was over. And suddenly, I knew that we were not doing the right thing for them.

So, with the beginning of the next church-year, a complete change of plan was inaugurated. It began with a deliberate attempt to put the prayer-meeting at the very center of our church life. Every year I announce the three central objectives toward which I am to lead the church during the ensuing months. For this year, I named the prayer-meeting as the focal point, and described our purpose in these words:

"An outstanding great prayer-meeting as the mid-week feature of our church life. I do not think of the prayer-meeting as the thermometer of the church. It is the absolutely necessary steam-engine itself. Every member needs the prayer-meeting. The prayer-meeting must minister to every member. We must have a great, all-inclusive spiritual dynamo for our needs. We must focus our attention on this possibility."

Immediately, a change in atmosphere took place. It was known that every plan of our life would be

subordinated to this purpose. Our prayers, our enterprises, our powers were all to be directed this way. The prayer-meeting notices were given first place, the prayer-meeting devices were upon our people's lips.

Its reaction upon myself was startling. I found the mid-week service bulking large in my preparation. It was no longer a subsidiary issue which could be neglected until late Wednesday afternoon. It became a central point in my own scheme of the week. My physical strength was to be conserved, with this great service in mind. My mind was to be kept fresh for it. And a new premium was put on my own faithfulness. Wednesday night was no longer an appointment which I could cut if an attractive invitation came, and I was tempted to leave the assistant pastor or some deacon in charge. Instead, Wednesday night bulked as large as Sunday. I gave myself wholly to it. I have not missed one in months now, and never think of missing one as a possibility.

It was this focusing of attention which began our great mid-week adventure. When the church realized that its year's program might succeed in every other particular, and yet be a failure if we did not build up a great prayer-meeting, when my

own sincere anguish over this matter began to penetrate, and it was realized that I would rather die than end the year under the cloud of monotonous prayer-meeting failure, the tide began to turn.

The September meetings marked the beginning of new things. By October our chapel room was crowded week after week. With the first of November we were forced to move into our main auditorium. And we are there still, with interest in the program at white heat. So, the first question to decide is this—Do you want a great prayer-meeting sincerely enough to pay for it? If you do, you are on your way toward getting it! But if you press me to tell you how, I must hang my head in embarrassment. Frankly, I do not know. I can only tell you the things which we did and which seem to be novel enough to justify attention.

We began by calling them "Old Fashioned Prayer-Meetings." We wanted to make it perfectly plain that we were cutting absolutely clear from the noisy, garish, high-pressure program of Food, Faith, and Fun. We did continue to serve our regular church suppers, for there are scores of people in our church who could not go home from business and get back in time for the prayer-meeting, and for these we provided the convenience

of a well-served quiet meal. But no games, no slapping on the back, no wild songs. After supper the service began, with a deliberate interval of half an hour while our boards were meeting and while people had a right to do as they pleased. What they chose was consistently the quiet joy of friendly conversation.

As for the meeting program itself, it was almost inexplicably old-fashioned. A few of the old hymns, requests for prayer, a brief talk from the pulpit, and discussion,—that was all. But with these points of difference:

The old hymns were used for the most part antiphonally, with solo and quartet parts previously arranged, and there was no attempt to get extraordinary volume of singing. We wanted people to enjoy it, and that meant giving them a chance to sing if they would.

The prayer portion of the service represents a change in plan. I can think of no feature which has been more perilous to the success of the meeting. One may be actually in control of things during every other part, but when one invites spoken prayer, all vestige of command disappears, and one is at the mercy of circumstances and uncertain minds. The long, long prayers which have

been said time and time again in the same places and with the same tone of voice, the meaningless wanderings of those forlorn saints whose untethered minds leap the fences into the boundless pastures of spoken prayer,—well, there may be some who know how to handle such a period and make it produce inspiration, but I confess that the combination defeats me. And I have seen a hundred splendidly promising prayer-meetings make utter wreck upon this very rock.

So, when the prayer-time comes, we ask for suggestions from the prayer-meeting congregation of objects of prayer. People who are sick, in trouble, fighting against great odds, battling with hard temptation,—these are mentioned, sometimes by name, often only described. Then we bow all together in silent prayer, remembering these mentioned people, and everyone participating in the stillness. At the end of some moments of prayer, we join with bowed heads in " The Lord's Prayer," or sing softly a verse of some old hymn, and then the prayer is over.

If it be objected that we are sacrificing the training which might otherwise be given in the art of spoken prayer, I answer that we are substituting a sense of control in the meeting, plus a prayer in

which all, young and old, can share, plus a training in that far more needed art of silent prayer. I should rather train our entire group to bring themselves naturally into quiet meditative petitions, than train a half dozen pious souls in the phraseology of traditional prayer-meeting requests to God. We are taught to pray in the silent places of our own hearts. I think we shall find use for that gift.

My share in the discussion is very brief. The theme of the meeting, always announced in advance, is always a slightly controversial one. Often I propose the theme of my Sunday sermon for discussion, and on Wednesday nights sum up my arguments and ask, "Does this fairly represent the church? Was this sermon a true one?" Often we discuss a moot question which arises out of the newspaper reading of the day. "Is Capital Punishment Christian?", "The Church and Prohibition," "A Christian's Duty at Election."

But this year we have discovered a vein which promises much splendid metal. This month is Bible Month in our calendar, celebrating Tyndale's first printed English Bible. Our prayer-meetings are all centering in the Bible. We announce them

as debates. I do my best as an experienced debater to maintain the anti-Christian point of view. One Wednesday night, I argue with all my skill that the Bible is untrue, and for this task summon Voltaire and Ingersoll and Paine as my authorities. Having stated my case briefly, I dare the congregation to prove the contrary. For the following weeks, I am to prove that the Bible is out of date, impracticable, and unreadable, while my congregation defends the old Book. You should see them bristle as I pour in my ridicule and my sarcasm. You should watch them rise to say a word on the Lord's side. And the comments become brief and to the point as you gear them to a specific question of bristling interest.

Next month we shall be engaged in a personal evangelism effort. I shall use the prayer-meetings to present as fairly as possible the arguments of those who oppose Christianity,—the atheist, the agnostic, the scientific materialist, and the ignorant. And my congregation will be asked to answer each in turn. Do you see what training it is in the apologetics of faith? And what an opportunity it gives me, after they have vehemently insisted that the Bible is true, to turn on them and say, "Very well, then. If it is true, why do you

not give more evidence of really believing and obeying it? "

For next year, I already have visions of a series in which I shall adopt the point of view of various other religious faiths,—Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christian Science, etc., and insist upon a defense on the part of Christians against the attacks of such beliefs. But I never take more than ten minutes for my share.

Then the meeting is theirs. I have only one word of caution about that. For myself, I always stay in the conversation. I do not turn the subject over to them and return to the depths of a pulpit-chair while they talk to one another. When they talk, they are talking to me, and I am intently listening, interrupting, commenting, summing up, and in general holding to the threads of the discussion. So the long-winded saint, who is always with us, finds me saying, " That reminds me of that great hymn, ' Rock of Ages.' Let us sing one verse of it together." And before we have finished singing, she is silent and seated and satisfied with herself. Or else she is still standing, in which case we sing another verse of the hymn. I have yet to see anybody survive the second verse.

Of course, we begin promptly at 7: 45, and end

as promptly at 9: 00 o'clock. The policy of a limit acts as a safety valve and represses otherwise explosive power of words.

But when we go, we go with minds refreshed, new stores of information at our disposal, a wholesome, happy memory of shared needs in prayer, and a determination to come again. The mid-week service has taken its deserved place at the very center of the life of the church.

XII

THE SHAME OF UNEMPLOYMENT

SOMEWHERE along the trail of civilization, society has succeeded in making men ashamed of idleness. I suspect that the innovation in attitude is not very old. As late as Captain John Smith's adventures in early Virginia colonization, tradition traces a legal dictum that "the man who will not work, cannot eat." And this ancient insistence betrays the fact that in that primitive grouping, at least, hunger had to be threatened before laziness could be conquered.

Certainly something had to be done in sheer self-defense. We are an indolent lot. Basking is still a pleasant habit. We like to see others do our work. And often the mere urge of necessity does not move us into activity. For some of us have inherited and some of us have quickly amassed enough so that we do not need to work.

But so effective have been the devices of society that we are now witnessing the development of a new cult. Led by Edward Bok, who recently

retired from business and announced that he was devoting the rest of his life to enterprises of civic and national good-will, scores of business men are now devoting their declining years not to the dull lassitude of absolute detachment, but to the splendid recreation involved in skillful work on behalf of beloved causes, without the thought of recompense. It will not be long, if this trend is followed, before to the age limit of active business life there be added a money limit, whereupon men will say, "I have reached my set requirements of acquisition. From now on, I shall give myself as wholeheartedly to being useful as I have previously done to being profitable." At the other end of the scale are men who, temporarily, can find no work. Some of them resent it because it sometimes means the diminution of savings, the cutting of expenditures, the cold and hunger of poverty. But all of them resent it because it makes them ashamed of themselves to be unattached. Society has so successfully inbred this social embarrassment that even when men have tried hard to get work, and with the best intentions in the world have failed, the stigma of the unemployed still attaches to them, and their minds take on a very bitter inferiority complex.

Whiting Williams, that indefatigable and original investigator of "What's on the Worker's Mind?" has returned from his intimate surveys with this conviction as central in his conclusions. Throughout industry, from top to bottom, the great hunger is not for food, nor for clothes, nor for comfort, nor for fame, but for that simple self-consciousness of participation in a job, which makes a man feel as if he really belongs. It is this mood which stirs that brutal stoker in Eugene O'Neil's thrilling play, "The Hairy Ape." Taunted by his fellows, he sneers back into the lurid depths of the steamship's boiler-rooms and howls, "I belong, I do! This thing stops if I stop!" We tamper with the very roots of the worker's willingness when for the sake of cowing him we beat into his brain that his place could be filled in a minute by a hundred better men whom we could obtain for less pay at the snap of the finger. A man wants to feel that he really fits somewhere in this great machine of human life. And the cruelest fate to which we can assign him is the Coventry of Detached Uselessness. All this, society has succeeded in impressing upon the mind of humankind.

I wish we could find out how. For the church

has never succeeded in doing it. And the church must battle for its life with the problem now. It is still the stylish thing to avoid church duties if possible. We have not succeeded in making men ashamed of themselves because they are not at work in the church. They feel quite proud of it. As a result, every church is divided into those two invalid classes to be so regularly observed upon the porches of our rest-cure resorts. Most people are either over-tired or over-rested. And the real problem in the church, numerically and strategically, concerns itself with the over-rested.

Paul seems to have been forced into dealing with the first foreshadowings of the difficulty. There is a verse in his first letter to the Thessalonians which sets the scene before us. The words seem totally colorless in the King James version, "Warn the unruly," but James Moffat's cruel Scotch shocks us into attention when we read his translation, "Make a check on all loafers," and when we turn to the Greek we discover that the modern words are more nearly correct. "The unruly" to Paul were not the tempestuously rebellious, the ungovernable, but rather the blithely undisciplined, those who were not willing to march in the ranks, those who had never shared in organized enterprises.

And on these we are to keep a check! Or at least, the Thessalonian church was! Perhaps there are no "loafers" with us.

For the sake of the over-worked, to relieve intolerable burdens? Yes. But for the sake of the loafers, too, whose spiritual death is threatened unless we change the situation.

And we cannot justly begin by accurately assessing blame. Of course, a person can find a place in a church if he really tries. Given a fairly open mind and a decently willing spirit, he will find no barriers before him. And, of course, a church can actually work people into its program if it really tries. Given that first flush of enthusiastic devotion which characterizes the new members, plus a functioning organization which will make the necessary initial contacts, and wastage can be almost completely stopped. But the awful tragedies of unemployment still go on, and there is blame enough to go round, if we are determined to blame everybody concerned.

We thought that we were doing rather well. We knew that we had hundreds of people actively interested and thousands of people attending our services. But off on the fringe of our constituency, individuals and families were withering away into

cool carelessness. And a rapid survey of the office records revealed the terrifying fact that of our 2,600 members, less than six hundred were specifically responsible for an authorized and organized task. Less than six hundred were realizing the thrill that comes from really belonging. If the church were merely a card index file of names, it would have sufficed us to keep names properly spelled, addresses properly inserted, and the mailing list up-to-date. But the church is a life, an organism. And detachment from functioning in line with the organic purpose means death for the detached and breeds death for the organism. Consider the vermiform appendix!

So we set about making the church as a whole feel ashamed of idleness. Taunts and jibes, texts and statistics were utilized in the attempt. And when interest in the general problem had reached a boiling point, we sent our centurion organization out into the constituency on a personnel census. Each member of the church was asked to contribute the information requested on the personnel cards, and the list of available tasks printed on the back of the card served as suggestions for halting minds. While the canvass was being accomplished, a Personnel Commission was appointed with power

and responsibility for seeing to it that every member in the church had one task and no more than one. This task, by the way, was not to be loosely defined. It was to be an actual assigned duty at some point in our organizational scheme. We were not to be content until our graph of responsibility could be drawn through our central boards, through committees, through separate enterprises, through special functioning, down to the last individual member upon our lists. The three lines of converging responsibility which meet in the pastor's office, were to diverge through the departmental scheme, until they became 2,600 functioning units, with as little interchanging and duplicating as possible.

Evidently the task will require years. It is not easy to displace these faithful people who have allowed themselves to be loaded up with six or seven duties. But they yield with wonderful grace when it becomes plain to them that there are not jobs enough to go round. And they can almost always be made to see that the change is not a demotion in rank. For people of real ability can be promoted to one real job which is more important and more absorbing than the six or seven scattered jobs were.

And it is not easy to swing everyone, habitualized by long habits of idleness, into line with a bold program like this. But already we have had startling results. The original census has revealed literally hundreds of people, possessing literally hundreds of invaluable talents which they had kept hidden, secretly hoping that some day they would be asked to help. All the blasts of pulpit dynamite, all the quiet pleas of separate organizations, had not stirred them. But a cardboard questionnaire, as a part of a complete church census, tapped the gushers.

Many did not sign their cards at all,—wanting time to think it over, or planning to completely avoid the issue by delay. Many gave names and past records, but failed to stipulate a line of work which attracted them. This is not to be wondered at when you realize what habits of aloofness we had made natural to them. This new blast of a bugle frightened them a little. And their modesty was the salvation of the Personnel Commission.

For the flood of willingness that came was enough to inundate the members of the commission. They must sort these cards representing definite ability and willingness. They must pry out the jobs which will interest and absorb the

applicants. They must shift and move and realign. If 2,600 cards had come all at once, they would have been completely stunned.

Under an experienced executive who knows personnel problems, they are now at work. Each member of the committee represents informed responsibility toward one broad department of our work. Religious education, for instance, forms one great field. One member of the Personnel Commission handles the personnel for Religious Education. Cards stipulating experience or interest in this field are turned over to him. He explores the field on the lookout for complete staffing of the whole department. He makes new jobs when he can, and holds in reserve or in understudy positions such people as cannot immediately be used.

There will be time enough to attack the indifferent later. Can we make them understand what we are after? Can we show them the fatality of their detachment? Can we make them ashamed of their desires to ride on other people's efforts? It will be fun to work out the details of that assault which must soon be ordered.

Sometimes it seems hopeless. The captains come back with reports that doors have been slammed in their faces and curses have been

hurled at them when they mentioned the fact that they came from the church. And they bring the news to me with fagged discouragement in their eyes. But I always say, "Once those very people who reviled you so rudely were new members of this church. They joined with hopes as fair and a consecration as eager as those fine folk whom we welcomed last Sunday. It all points to the terrible lesson. We must not by neglect make any more people feel toward us as those cantankerous members do. Perhaps they would have been all right if only our Personnel Commission had been working then."

And we set to work with new vigor on our new members. For the first task of the Personnel Commission is not the hardened loafers out on the edges daring you to put a check upon them, nor yet the willing workers who volunteer their gifts and plead to be attached, but the new members who month after month pour into our life, and who must be grafted into our work at once.

For them we have devised a census card, signed and completed when first they appear before our Boards. Their willingness to join the church is taken as tantamount to a willingness to serve. And their cards become the first order of the day with

the Personnel Commission. Where do they fit? Of how large a place are they capable? How soon can we attach them?

If once we succeed in gearing our 2,600 members to the work of our church, the walls of this city will collapse, before our advance, and Jesus will rule here. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!

THE END

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